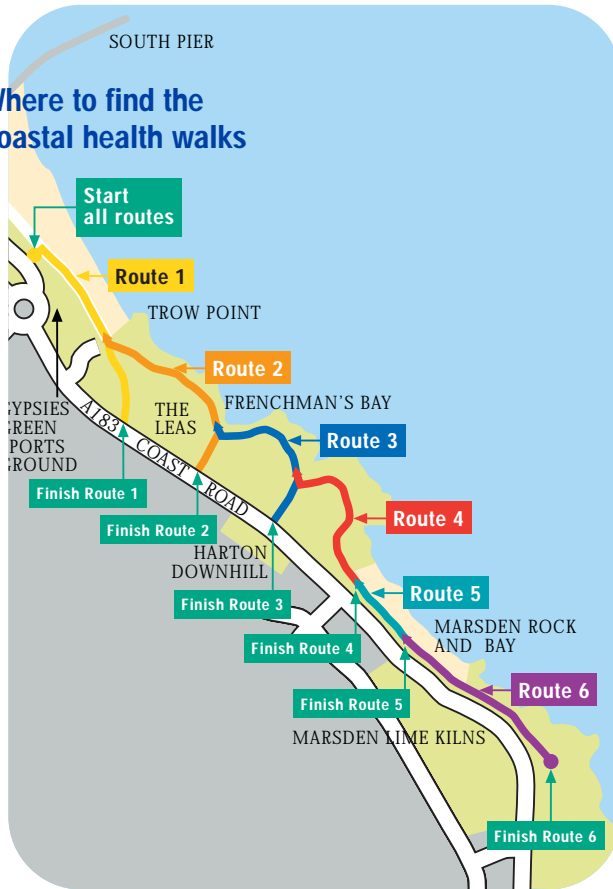












Where to find the coastal health walks



Key to symbols used throughout the maps

	Bus stop		Slope down (including gradient)
	Car parking		Slope up (including gradient)
	Café		Steps up/down (including number)
	Information		Toilets
	Public house		
	Seat		

Walk your way to better health

Half an hour of brisk walking on most days can:

Improve - weight control, stamina, confidence, community spirit, life expectancy, posture, energy and self-esteem.

Reduce - heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, bowel cancer, arthritis, anxiety and osteoporosis.

Furthermore, almost everyone can do it, you don't need any special equipment, it's easy and it's free! So why not take the first steps along the coastal health walks, but remember not to overdo it. Start slowly and build up gradually. Aim to walk for half an hour on most days, at a pace that makes you breathe a little faster, feel a little warmer and have a slightly faster heart beat. Walking doesn't have to be 'hard' - you should be able to carry out a conversation quite easily as you go, so why not go with a friend or your family? The potential benefits of walking are far greater than any risks but if you haven't been active for some time, or are concerned about your health, check with your doctor before you begin.

Getting to the Health Walks

All the walks start at the Amphitheatre on Sea Road, South Shields, where there is a Tourist Information Centre that is open from Easter to September.

The E1 bus service between South Shields and Sunderland provides a regular service along the coastal strip and there is a bus stop by the Amphitheatre. Contact North East Travel Line on 0870 608 2608 for more information. Alternatively you can obtain a bus timetable from Nexus Travel Shops and Stagecoach Busways Travel Shop.

Getting around the Health Walks

The walks have been designed with everyone in mind, including people with pushchairs and wheelchair users.

Each route has been fully surveyed to identify surface types, any slopes and the location of steps. This information is indicated on each map to help people decide if they can negotiate a particular walk before leaving home.

Coastal Emergency Marking System

These spectacular cliffs can be dangerous if people are not careful. The edges are unstable, so do not cross the barriers, climb the cliffs or walk underneath them. Please observe the warning notices at all times.

In the event of an incident please note the number to be found on the nearest warning sign and refer to it when reporting the incident.



Walking Works Wonders in South Tyneside

The project is a partnership between South Tyneside Council, South Tyneside Health Promotion, South Tyneside Primary Care Trust, Age Concern, Health Action Zone and Groundwork South Tyneside.

Over the next three years the partners are planning to build on the success of the Monkton and Temple Park Health Walks to create additional sets of health walks around the Borough, including this one along the coast. Each walk will be waymarked to a very high standard and for each, a self-guided leaflet is being created. Most importantly, the walks are being developed in partnership with the community.

The project will also develop a network of volunteer walk leaders who will offer a range of led health walks throughout the year along the newly established walks.

So why not take the first step towards a healthier lifestyle while enjoying the free air and the countryside on your doorstep.

For further information about becoming a volunteer walk leader contact Ruth Nolan tel: (0191) 456 6903.

Walk 1 Trow Quarry Toddle

Distance: 1.85km (1.1miles)
Time: 40 minutes (excluding bus journey)



ROUTE

This short health walk starts at the Health Walk Information Board by the Tourist Information Centre in the Amphitheatre.

From the start follow the Promenade south towards Trow Point. At the end of the Promenade near the Waters Edge Pub there are two paths. Take the stone path straight ahead. Carry on along this path up the short, steep slope and across The Leas to the Coast Road where you will find a bus stop at which you can catch the E1 bus service back to the start.

The Leas

The Leas is 300 acres of grassy open space, given to the National Trust by South Tyneside Council in 1987. The area is managed sympathetically for nature conservation by the National Trust. Large areas are left uncut for much of the summer to allow ground nesting birds to nurture their young and also to allow wildflowers to set seed. The glacial drift that covers the underlying limestone was deposited over this area following the retreat of the last Ice Age some 18,000-11,000 years ago.



Walk 2 Frenchman's Bay Footsteps

Distance: 3km (1.9 miles)
Time: 1 hour (excluding bus journey)



ROUTE

This fairly short health walk starts at the Health Walk Information Board by the Tourist Information Centre in the Amphitheatre.

Follow route 1 until you reach the end of the Promenade near the Waters Edge Pub where there are two paths. *Don't* take the path straight ahead as you would to complete route 1 - instead, take the stone path on your left towards coastal marker no.12. Follow the stone path along the cliff tops and up the steep slope at the end of Trow Quarry. Continue along the cliff top path to Frenchman's Bay. Just past coastal marker no.27 the path splits into two. Turn right and take the path across The Leas to the Coast Road where you can catch the E1 bus service back to the start.



The Trow Rock Floating Platform

An experimental 'disappearing gun' was sited on Trow Rocks in 1887, at a time when the army were searching for the most suitable mounting for their new breech loading coast defence gun. This fine piece of Victorian engineering although a success, was not

accepted as a coastal defence weapon, and the people of South Shields had to wait until 1903 when the nearby Frenchman's Battery was completed.

The gun and mounting were removed soon after the trial. They were replaced in 1988 by South Tyneside Council with a static replica but the concrete pit is original.

Frenchman's Bay

This spectacular bay gets its name from a French ship that once foundered there. At one time accessible by wooden stairs, the Bay was popular with smugglers in former times.



Walk 3 Man Haven Mosey

Distance: 4.1km (2.5 miles)
Time: 1hr 30 minutes (excluding journey time)



ROUTE

This medium length health walk starts at the Health Walk Information Board by the Tourist Information Centre in the Amphitheatre.

Follow routes 1 and 2 along the cliff top path to Frenchman's Bay where the path splits into two. *Don't* turn right here as you would to complete route 2 - instead, carry straight on along the coastal footpath until you reach the next bay known as Man Haven. Turn right here just before coastal marker no.36 and take the path across The Leas to the Coast Road where you can catch the E1 bus service back to the start.



RESTHARROW

The Coastline

The coast between Trow Point and Whitburn is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of the rock formations and microfossils, and because of the wild flowers which are such a feature of the grassland and cliffs in the summer. All the way along the walks you will see flowers such as wild thyme, scabious, knapweed and restharrow at the right time of year. You may be lucky enough to see a porpoise or a seal out to sea during the winter. There is something of interest during every season so take binoculars if you have them.



Man Haven Bay

Situated between Frenchman's and Marsden Bays, this small delightful bay was once used, before the building of the Tyne piers, for launching the pilot cobbles when the sea was too rough to cross the Tyne Bar. The three semi-redundant boat houses that still remain today are all that is left of a once active fishing bay.

Walk 4 Marsden Sands Stroll

Distance: 5 km (3.1 miles)

Time: 1hr 45 minutes (excluding journey time)



ROUTE

This medium to long health walk starts at the Health Walk Information Board by the Tourist Information Centre in the Amphitheatre.

Follow routes

1, 2 and 3 until you reach the bay known as Man Haven. *Don't* turn right here as you would to complete route 3 - instead, continue straight ahead along the coast footpath to Marsden Sands. Carry on along the path to the roundabout on the Coast Road where you can catch the E1 bus service back to the start.



Velvet Beds or Camel Island

This island, cut off from the mainland at high tide, acquired its name of Velvet Beds because at one time it was covered with short fine grass with abundant thrift and was springy underfoot. The name of Camel Island has appeared in recent years, derived from its twin humps. The vegetation has been eroded away by increased numbers of visitors.

The remains of an old quay can be seen on the sheltered southern side of Velvet Beds. It is thought that it may be of Roman origin and certainly could have been used by the visiting "Gipsy Parties" from Tynemouth in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Also the

Jarrow Chemical Company may have used the quay in the 1830's when Keel Boats came round from the Tyne and loaded up with wedges of limestone from the north end of the Bay, which was used in the manufacture of Epsom Salts.



Walk 5 Marsden Rock Ramble

Distance: 5.7km (3.5 miles)
Time: 2hrs (excluding journey time)



ROUTE

This fairly long walk starts at the Health Walk Information Board by the Tourist Information Centre in the Amphitheatre.

Follow routes 1, 2, 3 and 4 along the coast footpath to Marsden Sands. *Don't* go to the bus stop as you would if completing route 4 - instead, continue along the path past the roundabout on the Coast Road and follow the coast footpath to Marsden Bay and Rock. You will find the bus stop opposite The Grotto where you can catch the E1 bus service back to the start.

Marsden Bay and Rock

The coast here has spectacular cliffs, caves and arches, and one of England's most important sea bird colonies with thousands of pairs of Kittiwakes, Fulmars, Gulls and Cormorants. The rocks, formed almost 250 million years ago, are Permian Magnesian Limestone and are of great interest to geologists world-wide. The limestones were originally formed as muds on the floor and flanks of a shallow tropical sea that

stretched from Greenland to eastern Poland, at a time when Britain lay deep within a great continent only just north of the Equator.



Marsden Grotto

Marsden Grotto, nestling at the foot of the cliffs opposite the Rock, has a chequered history going back to the smuggling

days, providing visitors from all over the globe with refreshments in a unique setting. The first occupant of the Grotto was 'Jack the Blaster' who, with his wife, set up home in the cave in 1782. During their ten years here they provided food and drink for visitors to the bay as well as, of course, to the smugglers. It is thought that Jack was responsible for the early excavation of the caves, along with the timber exterior. The stairs to the north were certainly his work, being widely known as 'Jack the Blaster Stairs'.

The Grotto has recently been converted into a Seafood Restaurant and bar.

Walk 6 Leg it to the Lighthouse

Distance: 7.3km (4.5 Miles)

Time: 2hr 30 minutes (excluding journey time)



ROUTE

This long health walk starts at the Health Walk Information Board by the Tourist Information Centre in the Amphitheatre.

Follow routes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 along the Coast Footpath to Marsden Sands. *Don't* go to the bus stop by the Grotto as you would if completing route 5 - instead, from Marsden Rock follow the grass coastal path towards Souter Lighthouse past the Lime Kilns. When you reach Souter Point car park access road carry straight ahead across the grass field aiming for the lighthouse. When you get near the lighthouse you will see a green gate in the wall, go through the gate to gain access to the lighthouse grounds. To find the bus stop, cross the road and turn right for a short distance. From here you can catch the E1 bus service back to the start.

Souter Lighthouse

High above the cliff stands Souter Lighthouse, which was built in 1871 and was the first lighthouse specifically constructed to use an electric light.

The National Trust opens the lighthouse to the public as follows – from April to October, open daily (except Fridays) from 11am to 5pm. An exhibition and video guided tours are on offer, and a CCTV enables those unable to climb the tower to see the view from the top. There is a souvenir shop and a tea-room. Telephone: (0191) 529 3161 for further information



Marsden Lime Kilns

Opposite the car park at Souter Point, to the north of the lighthouse, you will see the Marsden Lime Kilns, built in the 1870s. The limestone from Marsden Quarry was burnt in these kilns before being transported by train (known as the Marsden Rattler) to South Shields.

The quarries have been worked since the 19th Century but the kilns have been closed since Whitburn colliery stopped working in the 1960s.

Marsden village to the north of the lighthouse, was developed in the 1870s with the sinking of the nearby pit shafts and disappeared in the early 1970s when the area was levelled and grassed over.