

There are hidden gems of nature and history to discover on our Colourful Coast. Take a walk and see what you can discover or visit

**colourfulcoast.org.uk**

## Websites/Contact

- Cumbria County Council: [cumbria.gov.uk](http://cumbria.gov.uk)
- St Bees: [stbees.org.uk](http://stbees.org.uk)
- Colourful Coast: [colourfulcoast.org.uk](http://colourfulcoast.org.uk)
- RSPB: [rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk)
- Natural England: [naturalengland.org.uk](http://naturalengland.org.uk)
- Open Access Helpline: 0845 100 3298  
email: [openaccess@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:openaccess@naturalengland.org.uk)

## Getting to St Bees and Whitehaven



### By Bus

Please contact Traveline for up to date bus timetables



### By Train

Northern Rail run service from Carlisle down the Cumbria Coast Line to Whitehaven and St Bees and on to Barrow and Lancaster

Get more information  
from Traveline



**traveline**  
public transport info  
0871 200 22 33

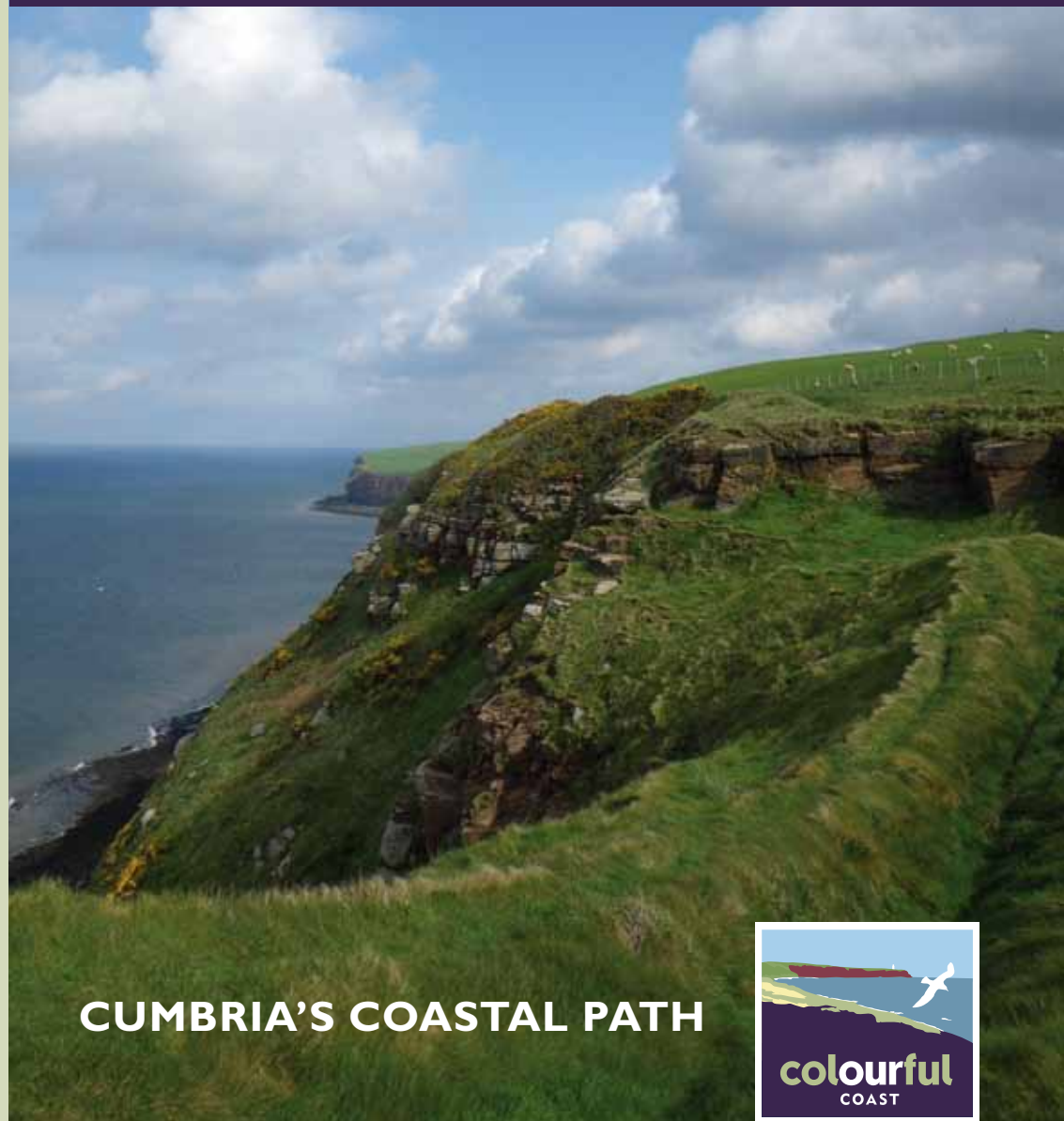
### Other Information

The train journey between Whitehaven and St Bees takes just eight minutes, and buses also run between the two. The Hadrian's Wall Cycleway runs down from Whitehaven via St. Bees on its way to Ravenglass.



There's also ample pay-and-display parking near Whitehaven Harbour and by St Bees beach, plus public toilets. Free parking is available at the Haig Colliery car park.

# Head for St Bees



**CUMBRIA'S COASTAL PATH**



# Area Description

St Bees is situated on the coast of Cumbria, some 40 miles from the English Scottish border. It is a small, very friendly community with a population of about 1,800. It is best known for St Bees School, a 400 year old co-educational public school, the Priory of St Mary and St Bega which dates back to 1120, and to countless numbers of walkers, as the start (or end) of the Wainwright cross-England Coast to Coast walk. We have highlighted 9 hidden gems for the area. We are sure you will find many more.

- Starting your walk from either St Bees or Whitehaven, the 6.5 mile coastal path takes 3 to 4 hours to complete due to the up and down nature of the headland
- The other highlighted routes marked on the map make for some shorter circular walks which vary between 4 to 6 miles taking 2 to 4 hours to complete
- The well used coastal path is gated, with some steep slopes, and also steps
- Sturdy footwear is advisable. Other permissive paths will also have stiles on them



*View from South Head towards St Bees*

## Colourful Coast Project

This is an exciting and forward thinking initiative being run along the coast between Whitehaven and St Bees. It's an example of how public access and nature conservation can go hand in hand.

Major improvements to the rights of way network have taken place along side the creation of new Open Access areas and new permissive footpaths with landowner agreement. The initiative has helped replace ageing ladder stiles with kissing gates, improve local biodiversity and provide coastal access paths. There is new permissive access to some of the highest points on the headland, encouraging exploration by local people and visitors alike whilst providing rewarding vistas towards the Lake District, Scotland and the Isle of Man.



*View from St Bees Quarry to Whitehaven*

## Remember the Countryside Code

During your visit to this area you will come across a number of paths that will be way-marked either as 'Open Access', 'Public Footpath' or 'Permissive Footpath'. Some will also have map boards as pictured.



*Open Access board*



*Permissive Access board*



*Bronze map panel*

You are welcome to walk any of these Open Access areas or routes. The main coastal path is highlighted on the map along with Open Access areas and some of the permissive paths.

Please remember much of the access in this area is given by permission of the landowner/s which may be subject to change. In return, you have a responsibility to follow the Countryside Code. Local farmers graze livestock within the fields - this is an important part of the management of St Bees head, both for habitat conservation and to make a living from the landscape. Please help by keeping your dog/s under close control, in sight at all times and when requested on a short fixed lead.



# Cumbria

## coastal cliff path

**There are nine hidden gems of nature and history along the colourful coast**  
Not only does the coast have the bustling harbour, shops & cafés of Whitehaven, and the red sandstone village of St Bees but a wealth of other gems. Here, we've chosen nine 'hidden gems' that highlight the wealth of stories, wildlife and fascinating places that await discovery along the cliffs from Whitehaven to St Bees.



### Saltom Pit

Down a steep, wide track, Saltom Pit was the first under-sea coal mine in England. The shaft was dug by hand in 1725. Now the atmospheric ruins stand by the waves and the shingle beach in tranquil isolation.



### Haig Colliery Museum

This was the last working coal mine in Whitehaven, and closed in 1986. Bought by the local community and staffed by volunteers, this is a wonderful view of Whitehaven's mining history.



### The Candlestick

All that remains of the Wellington Pit which dominated the harbour in the nineteenth century. This was a ventilation chimney creating a current of air around the tunnels of the mine, taking fresh air to miners working the coal faces up to 4 miles out under the sea. Wellington pit was the site of Whitehaven's largest mining disaster when 136 miners lost their lives in 1910.



### Barrowmouth Bay

A wild, isolated bay down a scramble from the cliff-top path, with a thin crescent of sand exposed at low tide. Barrowmouth has been mined for alabaster & gypsum since the 1730s – the buildings and tramway incline are gently crumbling back into the cliffs.



### St Bees Lighthouse

The first lighthouse was built here in 1718. The one that stands now was built in 1825 after the first tower caught fire. Here you can see the mountains of England and Scotland and is great for watching sunsets out over the Isle of Man.



### RSPB Viewing Points

From these viewing platforms you can see the huge colony of sea-birds that nest here. These are the only tall sea-cliffs between southern Scotland and northern Wales, so this is a vital nesting point for the sea birds of the Irish Sea. The best time to see the birds nesting is between May and July.



### Fleswick Bay

A wonderful isolated beach, is down a slippery scramble from the cliff path – it's a bit of a challenge but it's worth it!



### St Bees Beach

A huge flat expanse of sand when the tide goes out, with fascinating rockpools by the cliffs and sand dunes stretching to the south. And of course it is famous as the start of Wainwright's Coast to Coast long distance walk to Robin Hoods Bay.



### St Bees Priory

This 12th Century priory is named after the legendary Irish princess Bega who is said to have founded a Christian community here. The priory houses a display of information about the buildings history and the heritage of the local area.

Open access land

Public footpath

Permissive footpath

Permissive open access land

North Head

St Bees Head

South Head

Scale  
0 500m 1km

Saltom Bay

Tom Hurd Rock  
Little Hurd

Whitehaven Rail Station

St Bees Rail Station