

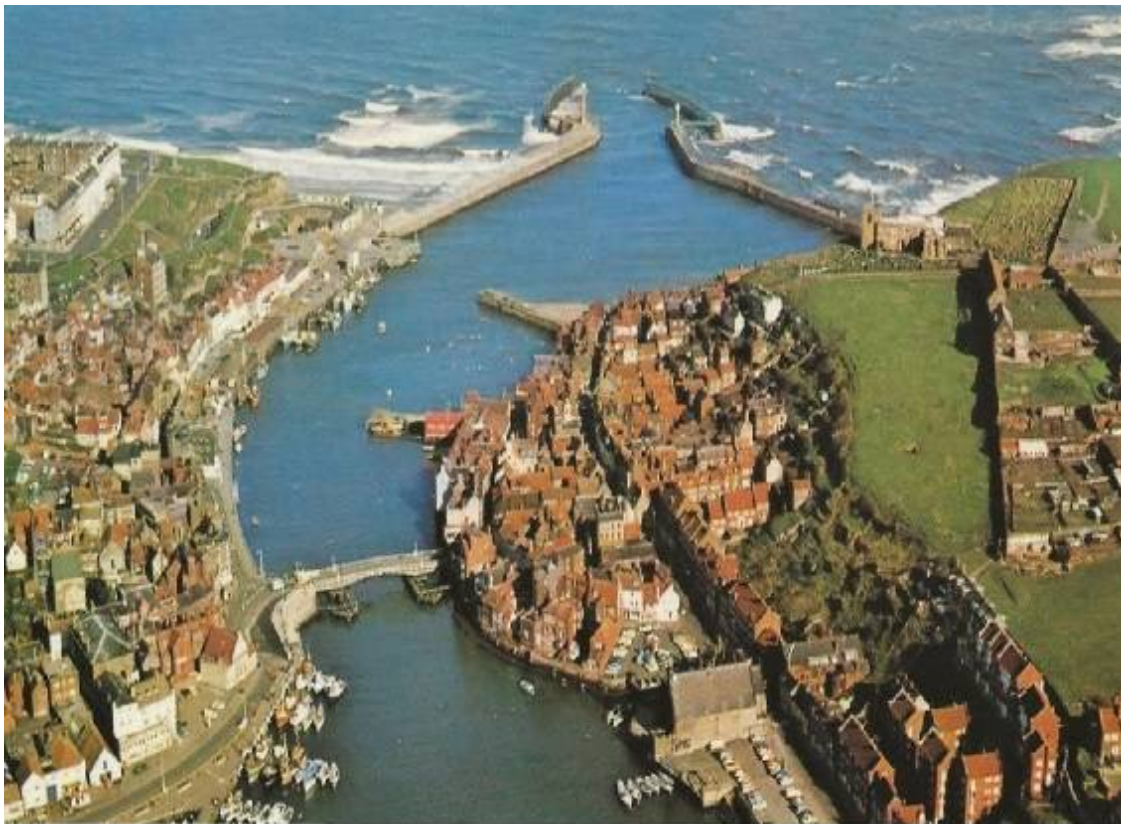
# Whitby Seaside Resort



Whitby



I have never really considered Whitby to be a traditional seaside resort. The few times we have visited it is the harbour, abbey & coastal walks which have been most interesting to us.



According to Google: Whitby is a seaside town in Yorkshire, northern England, split by the River Esk. On the East Cliff, overlooking the North Sea.

The ruined Gothic Whitby Abbey was Bram Stoker's inspiration for "Dracula". Nearby is the Church of St. Mary, reached by 199 steps. The Captain Cook Memorial Museum, in the house where Cook once lived, displays paintings and maps. North West of town is West Cliff Beach, lined with beach huts.



Runswick Bay



Sandsend Beach



Whitby Beach

When did Whitby become a seaside resort?

Whitby developed as a spa town in Georgian times when three springs containing iron salts were in demand for their medicinal and tonic qualities. Visitors were attracted to the town leading to the building of "lodging-houses" and hotels, particularly on the West Cliff. In 1839, the Whitby and Pickering Railway connecting Whitby to Pickering and later to York was built, and played a part in the town's development as a tourism destination.



Royal Crescent Whitby



George Hudson, who promoted the link to York, was responsible for the

development of the Royal Crescent which was only partly completed, less than half of the semi-circle was built. However Bram Stoker & Lewis Carroll spent holidays here.

For 12 years from 1847, Robert Stephenson, engineer to the Whitby and Pickering Railway, was the Conservative MP for the town.



Whale bone arch – celebrates the historical whaling industry  
Erected in 1853 – latest renewal 2003

Whaling was another local industry

The Whitby Whaling Company was first established in 1753 by local merchants and started off with just two ships which only caught 3 whales in the first year. Dutch Harpooners were employed to help increase the catch. Although Whaling offered an income to the locals of Whitby the trips out to Greenland were not an easy way to earn a living. Many lost their lives out at sea in the dangerous wild waters and extreme weather conditions.

The whaling fleet increased to 55 ships over time and by 1883, when the industry came to an end, 2761 whales had been brought back into Whitby harbour. Once landed, the Whale blubber was rendered down to oil in the boiler houses by the harbour. The oil was used for burning in lamps, making soap and candles. The skin was used for leather, cartilage for glue and the bones for making 'stays' in corsets. Visitors to the harbour did not enjoy the odour or blubber being rendered.

Whitby's best skipper was William Scoresby made 30 trips and captured 533 whales, more than any other European whaler.

Returning ships with a good catch onboard attached a jawbone to the mast. The whalebone arch up on West Cliff was originally erected in 1963, In 2003, due to their poor condition and decay, the original arch was replaced with another set of jawbones. The new jawbones came from a Bow Head Whale



and were donated by Whitby's sister town of Anchorage, Alaska. They were found abandoned after a legal hunt by native Inuits on Alaska's northern coast.



The advent of iron ships in the late 19th century and the development of port facilities on the River Tees led to decline in ship building & the *Monks-haven* launched in 1871 was the last wooden ship built in Whitby, and a year later the upper harbour was silted up



During the early 20th century the fishing fleet kept the harbour busy, and few cargo boats used the port. It was revitalised as a result of a strike at Hull docks in 1955, when six ships were diverted and unloaded their cargoes on the fish quay. Endeavour Wharf, near the railway station, was opened in 1964 by the local council. The number of vessels using the port in 1972 was 291, increased from 64 in 1964. Timber, paper and chemicals are imported, while exports include steel, furnace-bricks and doors. The port is owned and managed by Scarborough Borough Council since the Harbour Commissioners relinquished responsibility in 1905.

A marina was started in 1979 by dredging the upper harbour and laying pontoons. Light industry and car parks occupy the adjacent land. More pontoons were completed in 1991 and 1995. The Whitby Marina Facilities Centre was opened in June 2010.

Whitby is in the local authority district of Scarborough, much more recognisable as a seaside area. I found a very interesting paper written by John K. Walton, in the Department of Humanities at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston.

It is about Whitby as a town and Whitby as a seaside resort. This is all pre Covid of course and the number of visitors last season must have been much lower than normal.

Walton states that it would be easy to dismiss Whitby as remote, provincial, stagnant and of little interest outside its own locality. However Whitby manages to be an interesting and enjoyable place to visit.

In the off season the town has a very high unemployment rate, about 15% if you include formal & informal unemployment – ie. registered at DWP & not. Most seaside resorts are also net importers of migrants of working age, however Whitby has lost 8% of its working age population over the last 30 Years.

However the story is not all decline. Whitby has enhanced an existing reputation as a popular destination for seekers of distinctiveness and “authenticity”.

Day-trippers from Middlesbrough and the old industrial areas of North-East England and West Yorkshire have been joined by regular visits from touring coach parties and by more affluent visitors from further afield, keeping its tourist industry buoyant through times which were much harder in other resorts during the late twentieth century.

In 2006 it won the title “Best Seaside Resort” from *Holiday Which?*

Whitby has sandy beaches, a quaint harbour and abbey ruins,



Whitby Abbey



Also picturesque cliffs, fossils, jet ornament manufacture(made from fossilized monkey puzzle trees found on the moors – very popular in Victorian times & worn by Queen Victoria in mourning),



Jet Workshop Whitby



kipper smokeries, a folk festival, a regatta, literary and historic associations,

especially with Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, ( as mentioned earlier Bram Stoker stayed at a guest house in Royal Crescent in the late 19th century, and drew inspiration for his famous novel 'Dracula' from Whitby Abbey and the surrounding area. The novel depicts Dracula coming ashore in the form of a black dog shipwrecked off the coast of Whitby. The Dracula Society and a number of fans of the novel still travel to Whitby to commemorate the character for a few days every year in April and November. They dress in period costume as they wander the town and it seems almost as though Whitby has stepped back in time for these few days every year. ) This also draws the distinctively

black-clad Goth cult to the town at such evocative anniversaries as Halloween and Walpurgis Eve, (the eve of the Christian feast day of Saint

Walpurga, an 8th-century abbess in Francia, whose canonisation is celebrated on the night of 30 April with bonfires)



James Cook overlooks Whitby

Also with the explorer Captain James Cook, who is the subject of a memorial museum (Captain James Cook, the Yorkshireman famous for his exploration and cartography of Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii. He rose to the prestigious position of Captain in the Royal Navy, however it was in Whitby that the eighteen year old Cook was first taken on as a merchant navy apprentice for the small fleet of vessels run by local ship-owners John and Henry Walker. It is fitting then perhaps that their old house on Grape Lane now houses the Captain Cook Memorial Museum. )



Maggie Fish And Chips	
Our Fish is Always Fresh, Never Frozen.	
<small>Beats Fried The Traditional Whitey Way in Best Breagging Toffee! In Our Own Recipe Crispy Potatoes and served with Maggie Tartare Sauce, Lemon and Thick Cut Chips or a Salad Bowl</small>	
<small>All Fish is Cooked to Perfection - Please choose your portion if you would prefer</small>	
<b>Fresh Cod. All our Cod is Skinned and Boned</b>	
Cod 1st ... (ideal for Children or those with a smaller appetite).....	8.00
Cod 2nd ... (a standard size portion).....	11.00
Cod 3rd ... (Large Portion).....	14.00
Cod 4th ... (Extra Large).....	16.00
<b>Fresh Haddock. Our Haddock is Boned and Fried with the Skin on for Best Flavour</b>	
Haddock 1st ... (ideal for Children or those with a smaller appetite).....	8.00
Haddock 2nd ... (a standard size portion).....	11.00
Haddock 3rd ... (Large Portion).....	14.00
Haddock 4th ... (Extra Large).....	16.00
<b>Other Fish.</b>	
<small>Smaller or Larger Portions Available on Request</small>	
Halibut 1st/2nd.....	14.00
Plaice 1st/2nd.....	14.00
Plaice 3rd.....	16.00
Skate Wing 1st/2nd.....	14.00
Lemon Sole 1st/2nd.....	16.00
Pumpkin Pie or Steak 1st/2nd.....	16.00
Halibut Fillet 1st/2nd.....	19.00
.....	
Maggie Breaded Fishcakes with Chips or Salad Bowl.....	9.00
Chunky Pieces of Cod with Chips or Salad Bowl.....	9.00
Maggie's of Cod with Chips or Salad Bowl.....	9.00
.....	
<b>Whitby Whistling Scampi</b>	
<small>10 Breaded Large Jumbo Scampi Tails, Maggie Tartare Sauce, Lemon and Thick Cut Chips ...</small>	
<small>.....</small>	
<small>.....</small>	

Last but far from least the Magpie Café serves “the best fish and chips in England” according to restaurateur Rick Stein, I A report in the *Yorkshire Post* newspaper emphasized that this public relations triumph represented a considerable recovery from a low point in the mid-1990s.



The town is still fairly difficult to reach with roads over the moors, a bus link to Scarborough (1hr) or train from Middlesbrough (1½ hrs).

Goatland Station – 9 miles inland from Whitby



The North York Moors Steam Railway runs from Pickering to Grosmont & occasionally on to Whitby, through one of the most famous stations in England. Goatland has been used for many films including Harry Potter & TV series including Heartbeat. For railway historians the Beckhole incline is close by with a walk to appreciate the steep hill which required a system of water tanks to haul carriages up until an alternative route was opened in 1865.

While crossing the Moor by road the radomes or “Golf balls” of the early warning system at



RAF Fylingdales Early Warning Systems



RAF Fylingdales were visible. This Cold War system was in use until 1992 when it was replaced by an advanced radar system, the three sided solid-state phased-array radar (SSPAR) grey pyramid, still at Fylingdales. The radomes were later dismantled.

There is so much history attached to Whitby which is as much of a pull for visitors as any beach.



## The abbey – More information



Whitby Abbey



The foundation of Whitby Abbey was founded by Christian King Oswy, of Northumbria in AD 657 under the rule of St Hilda a double monastery of men and women which was normal in the early Anglo-Saxon Church.

Whitby Abbey figures largely in Bede's History of the Anglo-Saxon People, and it rapidly achieved a high reputation both for piety and for ecclesiastical training. In time it became the burial place for members of the royal house.

Two events stand out in the Abbey's early history: the Synod of Whitby and the career of Caedmon.

The Synod took place in AD 664, having been convened by King Oswy to settle a number of clerical and liturgical matters that had arisen between the Roman and Celtic elements of the English Church, and in particular how the correct date of Easter should be resolved.

Caedmon (d. 680), who became the most celebrated of the vernacular poets of Northumbria, was a farm worker on the lands of the Abbey during the days of Hilda, and known to be illiterate. It was following a vision or dream that he began to compose verse, his most famous work being the 'Hymn of Creation', which is the first written English poetry.

The Anglo-Saxon Abbey was destroyed by the Danes in AD 867, and the site of the ancient monastery laid waste for more than two hundred years. It was re-founded as a priory around the year 1078 by Reinfrid, a monk from the Benedictine Abbey of Evesham in Gloucestershire. For some time the new Norman Abbey flourished, but by the fourteenth century it had gone into decline.

The Suppression of the Monasteries by King Henry VIII from 1539 closed the monastery as a religious house, but the Abbey church, although robbed of its lead roofs, remained intact for a number of years.

From 1540 the property belonged originally to the Cholmley family, and subsequently to the Fanes through marriage. After gradual deterioration of the building over time much of the stone was taken away to construct Abbey House and other properties. The great central tower fell on 24 June 1830, and damage was caused by German bombardment during the First World War.

Subsequently, in 1920, the Abbey was given into the guardianship of HM Office of Works, now called English Heritage. The construction of the present church dates from the 1220s. Archaeological excavations marked out on the ground show that the earlier church was smaller, and the chancel had a rounded end, or apse. Excavations in 1924 to the north of the Abbey revealed remains of the Anglo-Saxon monastery, which unfortunately were not left exposed.

The later church is of the Early English style of architecture. After the east end of the second church was completed, the north and south transepts, the central tower and three bays of the nave were not begun until some twenty years later. By that period the cost of the work had put the Abbey into enormous debt. The remainder of the nave was not completed until the fourteenth century and the great west window was inserted in the Perpendicular style a century afterwards.