

# Walks Sandsend, Goldsborough and the coastal path

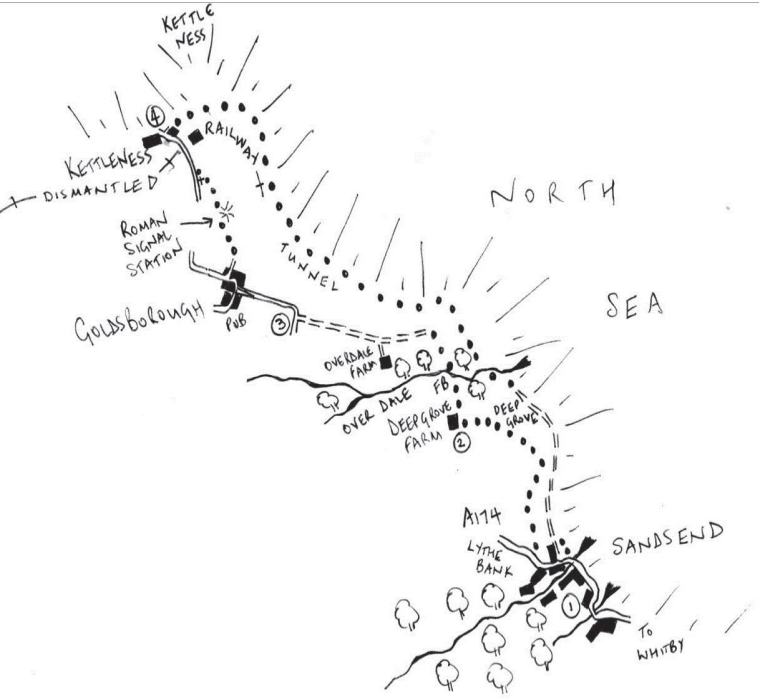
## Walk information

**Distance:** 10.25 km (6.4 miles)  
**Time:** 3 hours  
**Maps:** OS Explorer Sheet OL27 - always take a map on your walk.  
**Parking:** Car Park at Sandsend (pay & display)  
**Refreshments:** Pubs at Sandsend and Goldsborough  
**How to get there:** Sandsend lies along the A174 to the north-west of Whitby  
**Terrain:** Field paths, farm tracks, country lanes and cliff-top paths (Cleveland Way). There are steep descents and ascents into wooded Over Dale.  
**Caution:** Take care walking along the cliff-top path - keep to the path. This walk includes two steep descents and one steep ascent into and out of Over Dale.

## Points of interest

**S**ANDESEND is a lovely village, situated at the end of a long sweep of sandy beach that stretches all the way to Whitby (hence its name). Sandsend has a long history of industry dating back to the Romans who had a cement works here and later in the 17th Century alum was mined along the coast. Used in the tanning process as well as to fix dyes, alum was a valuable commodity. The last alum mine closed in 1871 as cheaper production methods were discovered.

Our route heads up across fields via the deep wooded ravine of Over Dale to reach the windswept hamlet of Goldsborough which, despite being less than half a mile from the North Sea, is about 500-ft above it! Just to the north of Goldsborough are the overgrown remains of a Roman Signal Station, built in the 4th Century as part of a string of stations along this part of the coastline to provide an early warning system of invading



Saxon attack to allow the Romans to scramble their cavalry unit at Malton or their naval vessels in the Humber or Tyne estuaries. This Signal Station would have stood 30-metres high (100-ft) and was defended by a wall and ditch.

Kettleness is perched precariously close to the sea cliffs above the pounding North Sea; in fact, in 1829 a huge landslip caused the entire village to crumble away into the sea far below; fortunately, the villagers were saved by a passing alum ship. The village was rebuilt within a couple of years, mainly because this coastline was such a productive area for alum mining; this stretch of coastline is still severely scarred by tips and spoil heaps especially around Kettleness Point.

The final part of this walk follows the old track-bed of the Whitby to Middlesbrough railway line, which was built in 1883. Once one of the most scenic railway journeys in England, the line was difficult to maintain due to coastal erosion and was closed in 1958, although the section from Middlesbrough

to Saltburn remains open to passengers with a freight line continuing to Boulby to service its Potash Mine.

## The walk

**1** From the road bridge across Sandsend Beck in the heart of Sandsend, follow the main road (A174) steeply up Lythe Bank out of the village, with views of the attractive assortment of cottages alongside Sandsend Beck to your left (note the old parapets of the railway viaduct across the stream as well as the station at the top of the bank up to your right). Follow the road steeply up for 300 metres then, at the bench just before the North York Moors National sign (over to your left), follow the footpath to the right through a kissing-gate, with superb views of the sweeping bay and Whitby Abbey in the distance. The path heads straight on alongside a fence on your left for a short distance then along a fence on your right up to the top of the bank, at the top

of which bear slightly left across the field. As you approach a fence across your path, bear up to the left (walking alongside the fence on your right) to reach a gate in the far corner of the field. After the gate, follow the path to the right skirting around the field, until you reach a gate on your right. Do not go through the gate, but follow the clear grassy track ahead passing quickly through two gates, with a huge old quarry down to your right (Deep Grove Quarry). After the second gate, bear left across the field towards a hedge corner, with Deepgrove Farm ahead of you. Walk past the hedge corner and go through the gate ahead, after which carry straight on along the indistinct track to reach a gate immediately before Deepgrove Farm (signpost 'Kettleness').

**2** Do NOT head through this gate but turn right immediately before it and walk across the field to reach a stile beside a gate in the corner of the field, after which carry straight on alongside the fence/hedge on your left that leads into woodland. The path now drops steeply down steps in the confines of Over Dale, crosses a footbridge then climbs steeply up again to reach a stile at the end of the woods. After the stile, walk alongside the hedge on your left then, after 300 metres, turn left along a clear track. Follow this track straight on (hedge on your right) for 400 metres to join a clearer track (at a track junction, with Overdale Farm across to your left). Carry straight on along the farm track for 650 metres to join a road.

**3** Turn right and follow the road (take care) into Goldsborough. At the road junction in the centre of Goldsborough, follow the road straight on towards 'Kettleness' then, just after the last building on the right, turn right along the track (signpost) into the farmyard (passing between farm buildings) to reach a gate beyond the buildings. After the gate, follow the

enclosed grassy path down to reach another gate, after which bear left across the rough field passing to the left of the grassy remains of the Roman Signal Station (the highest part of the field) to reach a stile near a small wooden barn. After the stile, head down across the field to reach another stile just to the right of a small stone-built chapel and skirt around the chapel over another stile and onto the road. Turn right along the road (take care) into Kettleness, passing the old Railway Station on your left down to reach the cliff-top near to the end of the road, where you turn right along the grassy cliff-top path of the Cleveland Way (Sandsend 3 miles).

**4** Follow the Cleveland Way cliff-top path straight on (take care - keep to the path) for 2.8 km to reach a path junction, with a path off inland towards Lythe. Ignore this path towards Lythe, and continue straight on along the clear coastal path for 150 metres then follow the path bending to the right (leaving the cliff-top) across the top of the field (cliffs and the sea away to your left) to reach a stile that leads into woodland. A steep path leads down steps again into Over Dale, and down to reach the old railway line. Turn left and follow the old railway line for 1.5 km back to Sandsend. As you reach Sandsend and the private gates across the old railway line, take the path that drops down to the left into the parking area and on to reach the starting point at the foot of Lythe Bank.

Mark Reid

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## Birdwatch By Ian Kerr

**T**HE great run of rare species has continued with more really good birds turning up across the region, to everyone's delight. Again, southern European species provided the highlights with a scattering of some very colourful visitors.

The most exotic was a bee-eater, pictured, Europe's brightest and most colourful bird, which turned up over Long Nab at Burniston with a group of swifts. Every year we are lucky enough in the region to get a few of these stunning, fast-flying birds which, as their name suggests, specialise in taking large insects, not just bees and wasps. The species has bred in the region,

once in Durham and then a couple of years ago in Cumbria. It would be nice to think this latest bird could meet up with another and decide to stay. It's unlikely but not, as previous experience has shown, absolutely impossible.

Another very colourful visitor was a hoopoe at Ravenscar. Last week I mentioned sightings in three coastal areas of another southern wanderer, a red-rumped swallow. This week it was the turn of inland Durham with a bird watched hawking for insects over Rainton Meadows.

From an entirely different direction, this time an Arctic

breeder, was a superb red-necked phalarope which lingered around Grindon Lough in west Northumberland. That rather bleak and upland site in the Roman Wall country has a reputation for attracting some of the few phalaropes which ever turn up in the region.

Among larger species were three common cranes which were seen over both Wynyard and Cowpen Bewley. Among rare waders, diminutive Temminck's stints were an attraction at both Saltholme and Castle Island in Northumberland. Last week I mentioned the rarity these days of turtle doves. This week up to three

have been found in the Sutton Bank area.

There has been a scattering of ospreys across the region. Singles were seen in three areas of North Yorkshire with birds passing over Burniston, Ripon and Hawnbly. Another seemed well settled at Lindisfarne where, as usual, the poles which mark the Pilgrims' Way across the flats provided it with a handy feeding spot.

These wandering ospreys will almost certainly be immature summering birds. The four pairs which makeup our own small breeding population are all now busy incubating their eggs at sites

around Kielder Reservoir. Once again this season there is no sign of other very suitable localities, including Derwent Reservoir, attracting breeding pairs.

The only other raptor of note over the past few days was a honey buzzard which drifted over Boldon Flats where a spoonbill was another local attraction.

