Key points of interest

A) Red Naval Mine

This type of mine was used during the Second World War for coastal defence. It is now used as a collection box by the Shipwrecked Mariners Society.

B) Bede's Cross

Erected in 1904, Bede's Cross stands as a memorial to one of Sunderland's most famous sons – the monk and scholar, the Venerable Bede. 1300 years ago Bede lived and worked at the nearby church of St Peter's.

C) Cliff Park and the First World War

On the eve of the First World War the local authorities secured Sunderland's coastline from a potential German attack. A series of defensive trenches were dug along the coast from Cliff Park towards South Bents. Soldiers patrolled the coast for signs of invasion and gun detachments were set up close to Bede's Cross to defend against hostile forces.

D) Lighthouse

Originally built in 1856 on Sunderland's South Pier, the lighthouse was dismantled and re-erected here in 1983 to allow for harbour improvements.

E) The Lowry Connection

LS Lowry (1887 – 1976) is one of the country's best known artists, famous for his distinctive paintings of industrial scenes. From the 1960s he regularly visited Sunderland, always staying in room 104 at the Seaburn Hotel (now the Marriot). Some of his work can be seen at the Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens.

F) St Andrew's Church

Built in 1907, St Andrew's is recognised as one of Britain's finest early 20th century churches. It was known as the "Cathedral of the Arts and Crafts movement" because of its decorative interior by Eric Gill, Ernest Gimson and A.H. Payne.

G) Roker Park

Roker Park opened on 23 June 1880 as a recreational space for the expanding suburb of Roker. The northern end of the park is dissected by Roker Ravine. In the 17th and 18th centuries the ravine was notorious as a site frequented by smugglers. One of the caves in the ravine was home to "Spottie", an 18th century sailor whose ship was wrecked off the North Sea coast.

H) Roker Pier

Roker Pier and lighthouse were built between 1883 and 1903, and developed into a popular tourist attraction. A tunnel runs along the length of the pier, to aid access to the lighthouse in bad weather. To the north east of the pier lies the wreckage of a German U Boat, which sank in February 1917 after accidentally mining itself. The U Boat was part of the German campaign of "unrestricted warfare" which aimed to starve Britain into submission during the First World War.

Facilities & Accessibility:

Toilets: Cliff Park, Seaburn Centre

Catering: various cafes, restaurants and bars on the sea front

Parking: Bungalow Café, Block Yard

Accessibility: suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs

Heritage Trails North Area

Roker Seafront Circular

Walk Distance & Time:

1.9 miles or 3km

40 mins (approx)

Start and Finish Point:

Bungalow Café

Pier View

Roker





Heritage Trails North Area Valk Roker Seafront Circular

Walk Directions

Starting at the Bungalow Café, head along Roker Terrace passing the Roker Hotel on the left, until reaching a traffic crossing adjacent to Roker Park.

At this point turn right onto the footpath and continue along the coast, passing the red naval mine on the right and Bede's Cross on the left. Follow this path until reaching the green space of Cliff Park. Take the path to the right that skirts round the park, passing the white lighthouse and old bus shelter until reaching the roundabout next to the Marriot Hotel.

Cross over the road at the traffic island and turn left (entrance to recreation ground is on the right). Cut through the recreation ground.

At the roundabout at the top of the recreation ground take the second exit on to Park Avenue. Continue straight ahead passing St Andrew's Church on the right until reaching Side Cliff Road.

Turn left on to Side Cliff Road and cross the road into Roker Park via the entrance on the right.

Walk down the bank and take the second left, passing the bandstand through Roker Ravine. Stay on this path to the sea front. After walking under the bridge, turn right onto the promenade until reaching a roundabout. Take the tarmac path to the right of the roundabout back up to the starting point. To the left are fine views of Roker Pier. On a clear day the North York Moors and Yorkshire coastline can be seen to the south.

