



About this guide:

You might like to use some of your time before September to investigate some of the Wirral's historical sites. There's an amazing amount of history just a few miles (or maybe even less) from your front door! Why not try to visit all of the sites in this tour? Bring it to your first history lesson in Year 7 and you might be able to get your first accolade!

Please remember to follow all the rules about social distancing during your investigations!



Did you know?

The Wirral's **coat of arms** symbolises the Wirral Peninsular, with a green background between blue and white waves for the Mersey and Dee estuaries.

The trident in the centre represents the Wirral's maritime activities – ports, shipbuilding, ferrying and fishing.

The red lion represents the Earl of Chester who formed the Hundred of Wirral into a Forest in medieval times. The white lion represents the Massey family, the founders of Birkenhead Priory.

The white bird on the sandstone rock is an oystercatcher, which can be seen in huge numbers in the Dee estuary.

Birkenhead Priory

Founded in around 1150, this Benedictine monastery was home to monks who farmed the land and supervised the very first ferry across the Mersey until it was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1536. During the Civil War, the Priory was fought over by cavaliers and roundheads, after which it was left to decay until the start of its restoration in the 1890s. Today, the Priory gives us a fascinating glimpse into life on the Wirral hundreds of years ago.



If you're not able to physically visit, why not try their website, which includes a virtual tour of the Priory and its grounds?

What I have learned about Birkenhead Priory:

Port Sunlight

This beautiful village was constructed by William Lever, the owner of Lever Brothers (today known as Unilever) to house the workers from his Sunlight Soap factory nearby. The village has allotments, an art gallery, a theatre and a fascinating museum. Port Sunlight is significant because William Lever was trying to provide "everything that makes life pleasant" for his workers at a time when many people lived in appalling slums in Birkenhead and Liverpool.

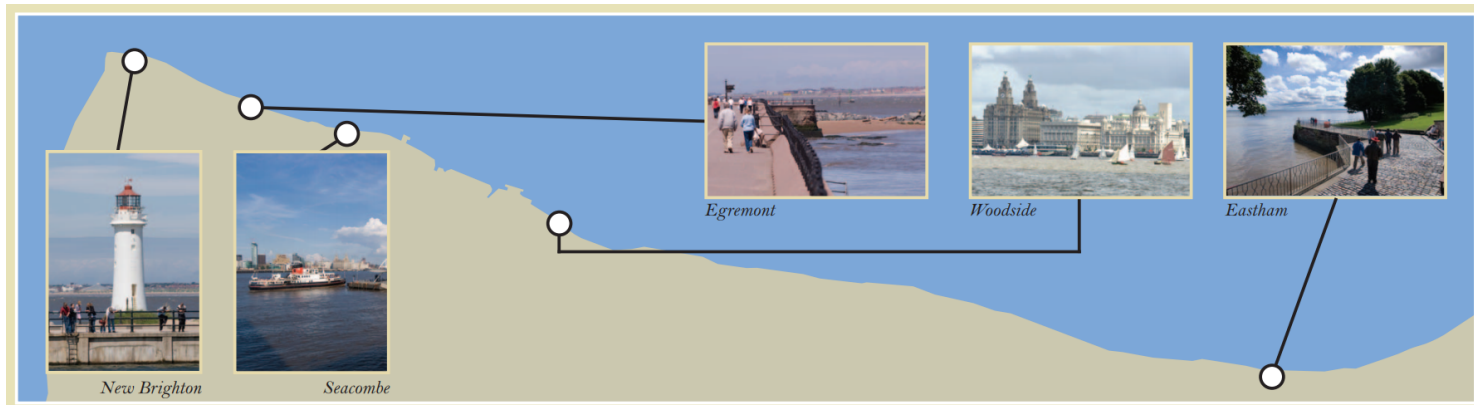
Even if the museum and art gallery are shut, there are some beautiful walks around the village to enjoy - and don't miss the large war memorial!

What I have learned about Port Sunlight:



Wirral Maritime Heritage Trail

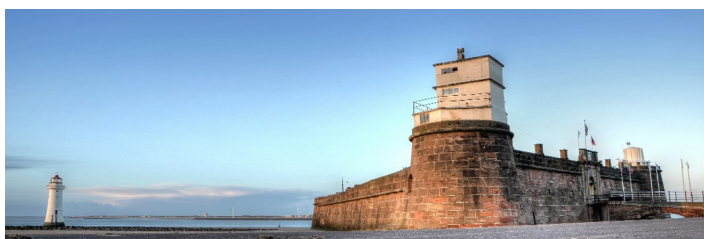
Fancy a walk? Why not take a walk along the banks of the River Mersey on the Maritime Heritage Trail to find out how the river shaped the Wirral and made the area a world leader in shipping and oceanography. As you walk along the coast, a series of plaques tells the story of the Wirral and the Mersey at Eastham Ferry, Woodside, Seacombe, Egremont and New Brighton.



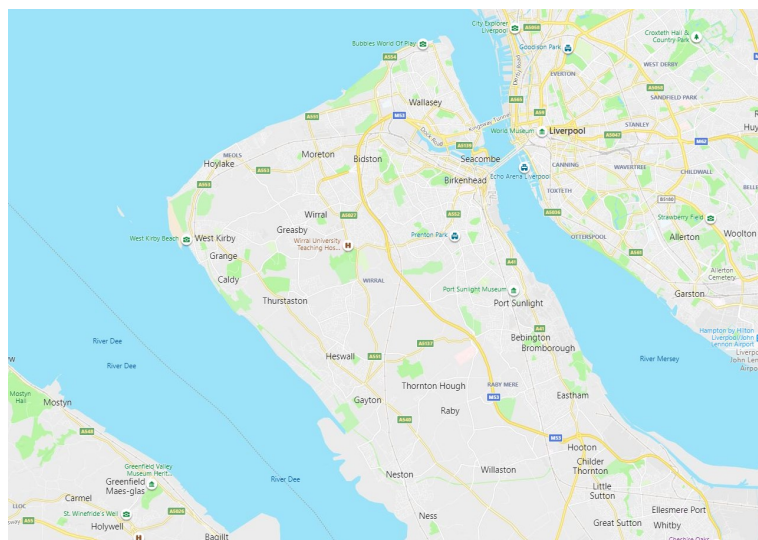
What I have learned about our maritime heritage: _____

Fort Perch Rock

Built between 1826 and 1829, the fort was designed to protect shipping entering the Mersey after fears of a possible invasion by the French during the Napoleonic wars. Some locals were angry when it was built because they had previously used that stretch of coastline to lure unwary ships onto the rocks and steal their cargo when they broke up! The fort has only had to fire its guns once - at a Norwegian boat that mistakenly sailed up the Rock Channel during WW1. Unfortunately, the shell missed and landed in someone's garden in Liverpool!



What I have learned about Fort Perch Rock:



What's next?

There are many more historical sites that you could visit over the summer - why not ask friends and family if they have a favourite walk or picnic spot?

You could mark your historical visits on the map above to show where you have been—and use the space below to note down any extra details that you have found out!
