

Southport to Liverpool Line

Still one of the jewels of the North West Coast, **Southport** offers something for everyone. Whether it's a day trip, or a weekend break, it's an ideal destination.



Shop on the stylish **Lord Street** and visit the newly renovated market hall, walk along the pier, bury your feet in the golden sand, visit one of many golf courses or wine and dine in one of the many contemporary restaurants on offer. If this isn't enough, look out for the upcoming Southport events programme on www.visitsouthport.com and don't forget the many beautiful parks and gardens you can meander through for free.

Southport also has a wealth of walking and cycling routes for you to enjoy. If you haven't brought your bike then you can hire one from the railway station or the **Eco Centre**. See the visitseftonandwestlancs website for details. You can also take bikes for free on the Merseyrail network, each of the stations between Southport and Seaforth have excellent routes for you to enjoy, and then you can get the train back!

Alight at Ainsdale and walk south to access the **Ainsdale Sand Dunes National Nature Reserve** managed by Natural England. This beautiful site is one of the most important wildlife sites in England and is one of the best remaining strongholds of the rare natterjack toad, Europe's loudest amphibian.

The next stop is Freshfield where you can visit the site managed by the **National Trust, home of the Red Squirrel, natterjack toads, prehistoric footprints** and miles of coastal walks just waiting to be discovered.

Three stations give access to **Antony Gormley's Another Place**, or the **'Iron Men'** as they are more commonly known. These are a very popular tourist attraction and many people visit the beach at Crosby to have their photo taken with an Iron Man!

From Waterloo station you can easily access the **Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre (CLAC)** and the **Waterloo Seafront Gardens**. The gardens are being reinstated to their Victorian splendour for everyone to enjoy. You can hire a bike at CLAC and make the most of your visit here. After a further three stations you arrive at Sandhills, this is the interchange to the line taking you to Ormskirk and Preston.

The train now continues on into Liverpool and on to Hunts Cross. Along this line the trains run every 15 minutes in each direction.

The Sefton Coast

Southport is just 20 miles north of Liverpool and with its beautiful beaches, unspoilt coastline and a superb choice of restaurants it's just the start of your adventure along this railway line.

The Sefton Coast is home to lots of golf courses, including Royal Birkdale which is accessed from Hillside Station. Although not open to the public for playing, there are a number of public rights of way giving great views of the course.

This coast is also famous for its red squirrels. The pine woods at Freshfield are an excellent habitat for the squirrels. Numbers were in decline due to Squirrel Pox Virus, however, extensive research and careful management have seen an increase in the population in recent years and visitors are more likely to catch a glimpse of this beautiful creature.

Crosby is the place to visit to see 'Another Place', the world renowned Antony Gormley sculpture, also commonly referred to as the 'Iron Men'.

Trains run every 15 minutes in both directions along this line and you can take your bike for free, without booking. Why not make the most of your journey and walk or cycle some of our wonderful routes? Suggested routes and itineraries are available on the Visit website at www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk



Useful Information

For train times and fares information call National Rail Enquiries on **08457 48 49 50** or www.nationalrail.co.uk

For assistance with your journey planning, special ticket offers and other useful information use the following links:

Traveline

0151 236 7676

Merseytravel journey planner

Jp.merseytravel.gov.uk

Merseyrail

Merseyrail.org

Northern Rail

Northernrail.org

BIKES ON TRAINS

You can take your bike free of charge and without pre-booking on any Merseyrail service.

Northern Rail do limit their service to 2 bikes per train, again free of charge and without pre-booking, however the conductor does have the right to refuse to carry bikes if the train is busy.

TOURIST INFORMATION

The Visit website (see below) is packed with ideas for wonderful days out by train.

Additional tourist websites you may find useful:

www.visitsouthport.com

www.westlancs.gov.uk/leisure-recreation.aspx

www.visitlancashire.com

www.sefton.gov.uk/around-sefton.aspx



www.visitseftonandwestlancs.co.uk

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Cover photo: Antony Gormley 'Another Place'

Great Days Out by Train!



Visit
Sefton & West Lancashire



Southport to Liverpool Line
Southport to Wigan Line

SOUTHPORT



A classic seaside resort with stylish shopping along Lord Street, attractions for all the family and events throughout the year.



Ainsdale Coastal Dune Path



Antony Gormley's 'Another Place'



Southport to Wigan Line

The first stop out of Southport is Meols Cop. This beautiful little station has won the Station of the Year competition with thanks to the efforts of the Friends of Meols Cop voluntary group keeping it in tip top order. This station is the nearest one to the historic village of **Churchtown** and the wonderful **Botanic Gardens**.

The next stop is Bescar Lane which is one of the stops for **Windmill Animal Farm**, although this and **Martin Mere** can also be accessed from New Lane.

Burscough Bridge is the main station for visiting Burscough attractions, cycle hire is available at **Burscough Wharf** and Burscough Leisure Centre. **Martin Mere** has also been linked to the station by a new signposted footpath accessed by a gate on the northern platform.

Parbold is where to get off for a more challenging walk, **Parbold Hill** and the **Parbold Bottle** (a folly) are a climb but offer great views over the Douglas Valley. If you don't fancy the climb then the **Leeds Liverpool Canal** is just a short walk from the station. The canal here is suitable for both walking and cycling.

Next is Appley Bridge, a visit to **Fairy Glen**, West Lancshires secluded and picturesque woodland, with its spectacular waterfall. This station again gives easy access to the Leeds Liverpool Canal for walking and cycling, as does Gathurst.

Wigan, the final stop on this route, is full of heritage for you to discover. **Trencher Mill steam engine** is one of the largest and finest working examples of its type. Or why not discover some of the miles of trails, wetlands and 'flashes'.

