

## ANOTHER PLACE CROSBY

Crosby beach has some strange visitors – 100 figures by *Angel of the North* creator Antony Gormley. Based on a cast of the artist's body, the sculptures are made out of cast iron and stand staring at the horizon. At first, on a busy day, they are hard to spot, arranged along 3km of shore and stretching almost 1km out to sea. At high tide just 10 or 15 can be seen, and only a few of them are visible from head to toe. The rest are partially submerged with some only head and shoulders above the water, not waving but drowning.

Up close the figures are worn by the elements, giving them a wonderful texture. Each one has a tag on its wrist

with a number. Despite the fact that each figure is 650 kilos of high-grade British art they seem pretty approachable and local residents have adopted them as their own. They are sometimes adorned with sun-hats, motorbike helmets and even Santa outfits. They're also a handy place to leave your flip-flops if you're heading in for a paddle (but please, no swimming on this beach – it's too dangerous).

The statues weather the seasons, looking beautiful against a blue sky and steely against a cold, rainy winter's day. It's a unique spectacle, the figures in harmony with their surroundings – classic but elegant, random but orderly, anonymous but human. Amid the almost







endless comings and goings further out to sea, their solidity and stolidity bring an enormous sense of peace to the scene.

Initially part of a travelling exhibition, *Another Place* was only meant to be here for 16 months. It proved so popular that Sefton Council voted to keep it and now the iron incomers are a permanent part of the local landscape, standing strong as time and tide ebb and flow around them.

#### **ACCESS AND OPENING TIMES**

Crosby is just north of Liverpool – once you get near the town *Another Place* is well signposted. There is a car park at the beach, and it is also easy to reach by bus or rail. [visitliverpool.com/things-to-do](http://visitliverpool.com/things-to-do)

## APOLLO PAVILION PETERLEE

The Apollo Pavilion is a curious thing. Built between 1963 and 1970 in Peterlee, a new town in County Durham, it's an abstract concrete sculpture, plain white apart from two small murals decorating the upper deck. Designed to span a lake and link two sides of the Sunny Blunts housing estate, it has divided opinion ever since it was built.

At 25m wide, made from concrete cast on site, it's a hulking great brute, spectacularly out-of-scale to everything around it. Abstract artist Victor Pasmore was brought in to design it after modernist hero Berthold Lubetkin's high-rise ideas for Peterlee proved unsuitable. Pasmore wanted

'The Pivvy', as it is known locally, to 'lift the activity and psychology of an urban housing community onto a universal plane'. Aspirations were high, and it was named The Apollo Pavilion after the moon mission which was reaching for the stars around the same time.

Almost immediately it became a haven for ne'er-do-wells and teeny-tiplers. Over the next few years vandalism, council in-fighting and neglect left the pavilion in a sorry state. The murals faded, the concrete decayed and the lake emitted a powerful pong. Eventually the steps to the upper deck were demolished and it was left to rot. When



## Northern Delights

it was turned down for Grade II listing in 1998 its future looked bleak.

For all its detractors the pavilion has always had fans too. The Apollo Pavilion Community Association has encouraged its appreciation, and public support has grown gradually. In 2008, Heritage Lottery funding helped to repair and renew the pavilion in time for its 40th birthday. It was listed successfully in 2011.

Today, the reinstated staircase, repainted murals and dapper white surfaces make a world of difference. The view from the previously inaccessible top deck cleverly frames the estate from different perspectives, and it suddenly becomes clear that this was meant to be a place for reflecting and re-presenting the world immediately around it. It all makes sense when you stop to appreciate it.

### **ACCESS AND OPENING TIMES**

The Apollo Pavilion is on Oakerside Drive, Peterlee, County Durham, SR8 1LE.

From the A19 turn towards Peterlee, take the second right beside Our Lady of the Rosary Church into Passfield Way and Oakerside Drive is third on the left (signposted 'Pasmore's Apollo Pavilion'). Parking is signposted. Go downhill from the car park, past the flats and along the path. You can't miss it. [apollopavilion.info](http://apollopavilion.info)



