

Local Changes

RH [singing *Fair Stood the Wind* by Alan Bell]

♪ *Now that the fishing has ended
Now that the boats are all gone
Now that the quays are deserted
There's talk as to what can be done
For once there was herring aplenty
Once there was cod by the score
Once there was fish landing daily
Just as in the fisherman's song*

Fair stood the wind, for the old fishing ground ♪

RG

What was funny about the site visit when I went back to look at the locations for this sculpture commission is it was in March so it was incredibly bleak. It took me by surprise, because it didn't relate to the memories that I had. And obviously, the cliff line is very, very exposed to the elements. And the day that I went was very cold, a very windy day. So it was interesting because it suggested an air of vulnerability, incredible amounts of exposure, which I hadn't felt about those places before. I'd always remembered having picnics on the grass, by the castle in the sun and it didn't relate to this harsh environment that I encountered.

MD

The interesting thing about both Whitby and Scarborough, if we set ourselves back in the past, say, for example, to the first million AD, what we would experience sat on this site is that we'd be surrounded by an awful lot more land that we would be now and this is all down to erosion and that cliff is eroding as we speak.

BL

Those cliffs are retreating, eroding at such a fast rate. You can really see homes falling over the cliffs.

MV

When Scarborough began its life it was a port for landing the herring and supplying the monasteries with fish just as a beach with a few cottages on and it's grown and grown since then. Certainly, the old town based down around the harbour. All the houses down there were filled with fishermen, sailors, merchant men, even shipbuilders. All that disappeared when steam came along and ships were built out of steel or iron rather than wood. So the heart of Scarborough was connected to the sea, to the fishing and to the shipbuilding.

RH [singing *Three Score and Ten*]

♪ *And it's three score and ten boys and men were lost from Grimsby town.
From Yarmouth down to Scarborough many hundreds more were drowned.
Our herring craft, our trawlers, our fishing smacks as well,
They long did fight that bitter night and battled with the swell.* ♪

LR

When I first used to come down to the beach, it was totally different. Well, it was the fishing and boats and we used to have wood boats landed here with cargoes of wood from all over.

TR

When I left school in 1962, there was probably 30 to 40 trawlers and the same amount of cobbles. Now I think you could count the trawlers on one hand.

LR

Three trawlers and 24 cobbles.

TR

They're all small boats working single handed.

MV

Fishing has been on the decline obviously since the 70s. Since the European Union put the quota system in.

TR

I've done all sorts of fishing. I've done sea net fishing, pair trawling, single trawling, I've done midwater trawling, most of our time was spent bottom trawling which is catching cod, haddock, plaice, lemon sole, dover sole, skate, everything that's on the bottom, towing a big trawl along the seabed.

MV

What was once Scarborough Harbor was full of small fishing boats has now been reduced to really big, what they call factory ships.

TR

The fishermen down there now, there's a lot of Filipinos that man the trawlers and Eastern Europeans. The family tradition was to follow your father, it's a shame that has dwindled in the last 20, 30 year.

MV

Yeah, the majority of people in the town have lost that direct connection to the sea, that closeness with the sea that existed probably a century ago has definitely waned now. We're all more connected to our computers, I think, than to the sea.

SC

Since the first lockdown at the start of last year, they've been loads, loads more surfers, I've seen a lot more people connecting with the ocean. I mean, I know a lot of sea swimmers, a lot of surfers, and everyone said the same thing, there's a lot more people in the water.

CH

I think Scarborough is having a bit of a renaissance in itself. It's a little bit less kiss me quick hats and rock, but I think we are a town that is becoming more chic, a bit more independent.

LR

Everything has changed and I think all you get now in Scarborough is mainly tourism and older people.

MN

There needs to be a little bit more opportunity for younger people. I mean there's, you know, there's obviously the tourism side of things but the tourism is only there through the summer months anyway, and a lot of this work is only seasonal, so they need to find an industry which can perform better on a year round basis.

RF

One thing that's very obvious is the rise in offshore wind, a large amount of economic activity associated with that, as we gear up to producing huge amounts of electricity from offshore wind farms. Although to most people it might be out of sight, most of the wind farms are over the horizon, certainly the very big ones.

MV

What we have got, which is very exciting, just started in last year, is a seaweed farmer. And he's going to grow this kelp in a seaweed farm just about four miles off of Scarborough.

WC

SeaGrown is a newly established company. We're the first in the UK to be farming seaweed at commercial scale in an offshore setting. And we've seen a lot of talent, a lot of young people disappear because there's no work for them. And if we can provide sustainable long-term jobs in a new marine industry on the Yorkshire coast, I think that that's a good thing.