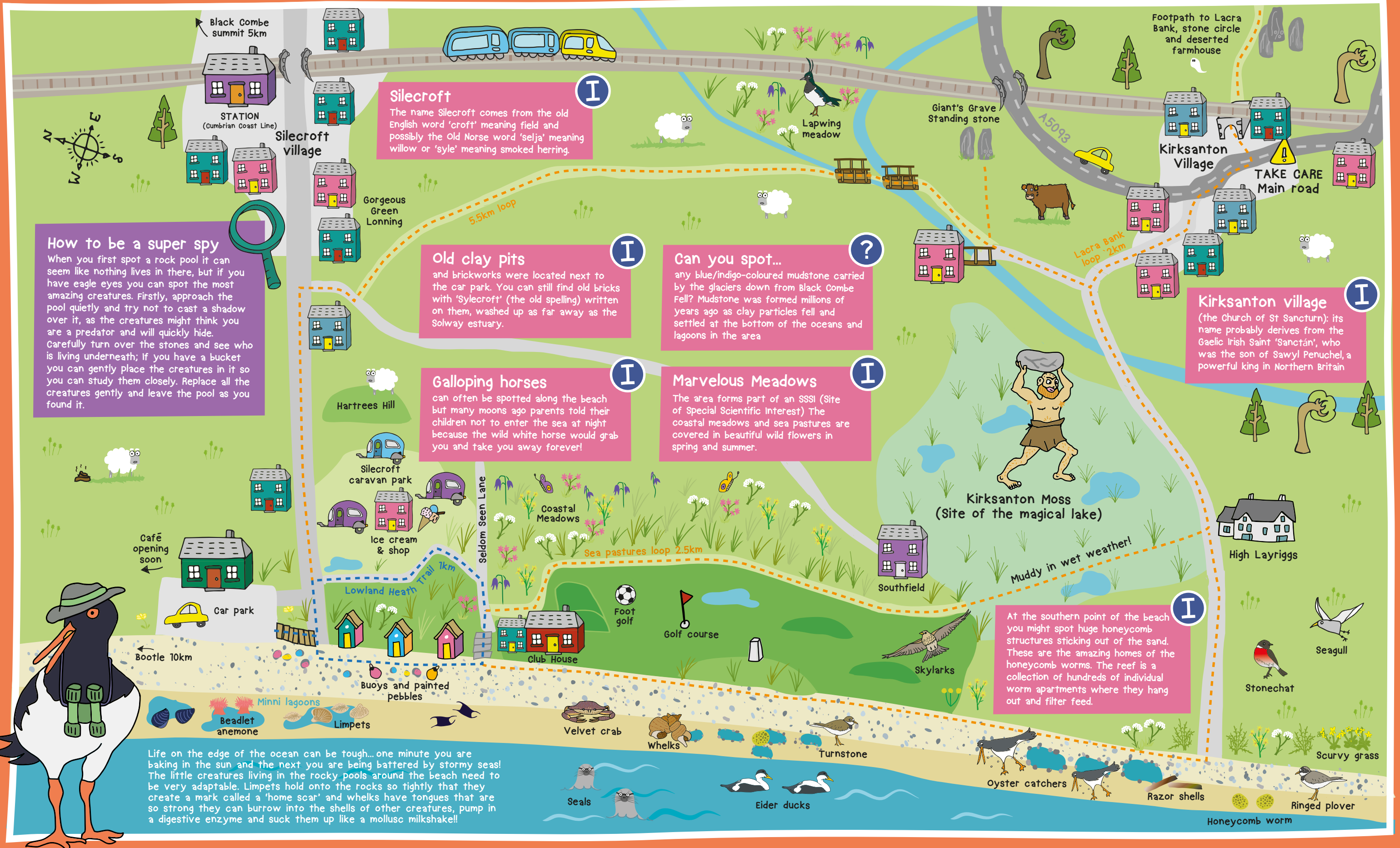


Silecroft- The Oystercatcher's Tale



How to be a super spy
 When you first spot a rock pool it can seem like nothing lives in there, but if you have eagle eyes you can spot the most amazing creatures. Firstly, approach the pool quietly and try not to cast a shadow over it, as the creatures might think you are a predator and will quickly hide. Carefully turn over the stones and see who is living underneath; if you have a bucket you can gently place the creatures in it so you can study them closely. Replace all the creatures gently and leave the pool as you found it.

Silecroft
 The name Silecroft comes from the old English word 'croft' meaning field and possibly the Old Norse word 'selja' meaning willow or 'syle' meaning smoked herring.

Old clay pits
 and brickworks were located next to the car park. You can still find old bricks with 'Sylecroft' (the old spelling) written on them, washed up as far away as the Solway estuary.

Can you spot...
 any blue/indigo-coloured mudstone carried by the glaciers down from Black Combe Fell? Mudstone was formed millions of years ago as clay particles fell and settled at the bottom of the oceans and lagoons in the area

Galloping horses
 can often be spotted along the beach but many moons ago parents told their children not to enter the sea at night because the wild white horse would grab you and take you away forever!

Marvelous Meadows
 The area forms part of an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) The coastal meadows and sea pastures are covered in beautiful wild flowers in spring and summer.

Kirksanton village
 (the Church of St Sanctun): its name probably derives from the Gaelic Irish Saint 'Sanctán', who was the son of Sawyl Penuchel, a powerful king in Northern Britain

At the southern point of the beach you might spot huge honeycomb structures sticking out of the sand. These are the amazing homes of the honeycomb worms. The reef is a collection of hundreds of individual worm apartments where they hang out and filter feed.

Life on the edge of the ocean can be tough...one minute you are baking in the sun and the next you are being battered by stormy seas! The little creatures living in the rocky pools around the beach need to be very adaptable. Limpets hold onto the rocks so tightly that they create a mark called a 'home scar' and whelks have tongues that are so strong they can burrow into the shells of other creatures, pump in a digestive enzyme and suck them up like a mollusc milkshake!!