



The Angel's Way

Seaton Sluice to Chester-le-Street
49 kms, 30.5 miles

Introduction



The Angel's Way is an important link in the network of the Northern Saints Trails. This route between Seaton Sluice and Chester-le-Street means that there is a continuous 114 mile route between Lindisfarne and Durham, using St Oswald's Way as far as Warkworth, The Way of the Sea from Warkworth to Seaton Sluice and after The Angel's Way, Cuddy's Corse (which is also part of The Way of Learning) from Chester-le-Street to Durham.

All the Northern Saints Trails use the waymark shown here. In two parts, from near Holywell to Camperdown and from Bowes Railway Path to West Urpeth, the route follows The Tyne & Wear Heritage Way which is well signed and the waymark is also shown here.

The route is divided into 4 sections, 3 of which are between 13 to 14 kilometres or 8 to 8.5 miles in length and section 3 from Millennium Bridge to The Angel of the North is just 8 kilometres or 5 miles.

The route is of course named after the iconic Angel of the North designed by Antony Gormley. Since it was erected in 1998, it has quickly become Britain's best known sculpture. When he designed the sculpture Gormley deliberately angled the wings 3.5 degrees forward to create what he described as "a sense of embrace". This ties in with the protective concept of the guardian angel and if you want to engage with that theme as you journey on The Angel's Way, perhaps this prayer will be appropriate:

*Angel of God,
my guardian dear,
to whom God's love
commits me here,
ever this day,
be at my side,
to light and guard
rule and guide.
Amen.*

Section 1

Seaton Sluice to Camperdown – 14km

Seaton Sluice

Seaton Sluice owes its unusual name to the efforts of Sir Ralph Delavel. The port here was difficult for ships to use, so in 1660 he organised the construction of a pier to create a safe haven. However the harbour was dry at low water and often blocked with silt, so his ingenious solution was to build sluice gates, so that at high tide the sea water was trapped and then later released to flush the silt and mud out to sea twice a day.

A century later, it was clear that the harbour was still not deep enough as the demands of the coal trade and the new bottle making works increased, so the owner of Seaton Sluice at that time, John Hussey Delavel, constructed a new 275 metre long cut through the sandstone rocks. It was opened in 1764 and was 9 metres

wide and 16 metres deep. It created the 'Rocky Island', which along with the cut is an intriguing feature of the town. This certainly brought its rewards and in the years that followed, the value of its shipping and exports was greater than its northern neighbour Blyth.

Leave Seaton Sluice by walking inland from the roundabout along the A190. After about 600 metres, you will arrive at the National Trust property of Seaton Delaval Hall. When the road bends to the left and where it then turns right, go ahead to visit the Church of Our Lady.

Seaton Delaval Hall and Church of Our Lady

This superb hall in the English Baroque style was built between 1718 and 1729 for Admiral Lord Delaval by Sir John Vanburgh, the architect who also designed Blenheim Palace. Sadly, both the admiral and Vanburgh died before the building was completed. The admiral's nephew, Captain Francis Blake Delaval, inherited the hall and it was he and his descendants who gained the reputation as the 'Gay Delavals' on account of their gambling and riotous parties!

In 1822 a fire destroyed much of the building. After forty years without a roof, the architect John Dobson was hired to shore up the roof. The east wing of the hall was used as a prisoner of war camp during World War II. The property came into the hands of the National Trust in 2009 and a major £7.5 million conservation work is being undertaken. The 400 acre estate has many interesting features including an orangery, a ruined mausoleum and obelisks.

Much older than the hall is the 12th century Church of Our Lady which connects us with the Norman origins of the Delaval family. Hubert de la Val was a Norman knight who assisted William the Conqueror in the conquest of England and he was given lands in the North East as a reward. The church was dedicated to Our Lady in 1102 and was a private family chapel for over 700 years until it was given to the Church of England in 1891. The oldest item in the church is the chalice shaped font which is late Saxon or very early Norman. The interior is dominated by the two fine Norman arches with chevrons and zigzags. There is also a small blocked Norman window in the north wall. Around the walls there are family coats of arms and one of them bears the inscription 'Magna Charta', as Gilbert de la Val was one of the powerful barons who forced King John to sign the Magna Carta at Runnymede in 1215. As you are on The Angel's Way, be sure not to miss the angels set in the 14th century tracery window at the west end of the church.



After visiting the church, return to the main road and turn left. After 150 metres, turn left into Harbord Terrace on the footpath which leads out to 'The Dairy House Fields' so called because there was a dairy farm here at one time. The obelisk is prominent to your left and about 350 metres after passing it, go through a gateway and take the footpath on your right. Cross straight over the railway path where The Angel's Way joins the Tyne & Wear Heritage Way whose signs we will be following to Camperdown. As you follow the path, you will pass Holywell Pond on your right before arriving at Holywell itself. When you reach a grassland area, turn right into Holywell Dene Road. On your left you will pass some riding stables. In the grounds is the ancient holy well after which Holywell is named and if you find anyone there, they might be able to show it to you. The well was said to have medicinal properties and was used by monks travelling between Tynemouth Priory and Newstead Abbey near Morpeth.

When you reach the main road cross over with care and the footpath forks off to the right down to old Holywell Bridge which was built in 1700. Follow the river for a while before going up out of the valley to fields. The path turns right and left to lead down to Holywell Grange Farm. 300 metres after passing the farm, take the footpath on your right. The path follows the field boundaries right and left to reach a cycle track where you turn right. Shortly afterwards turn left with the former Seghill waste tip on your right. When you reach the railway turn right and after 200 metres, go sharp left under the railway tunnel. Continue on this path and you will come to a junction of cycle paths where you carry straight on into Fisher Road. You will soon reach the main road (Backworth Lane) where The Angel's Way turns right, but you might like to consider a short diversion to Backworth village to your left before you do so.

Backworth

The name of Backworth has Anglo-Saxon origins and mean's 'Bacca's enclosure'. In an assessment-roll of 1292 Backworth is included as one of the ten manors belonging to Tynemouth Priory. After the dissolution of the monasteries, Backworth was associated with the Grey Family and in 1780 they employed the architect William Newton to design Backworth Hall which is an attractive mansion and well worth visiting. In the early 19th century, the estate was sold to the Duke of Northumberland who was interested in the profits to be had from coal mining. The colliery to the north of the present village opened in 1818. It had the distinction of being the deepest pit, at 440 metres, in the Northumberland coalfield. It closed in 1980. By the 20th century the hall was falling into disrepair and in 1934 the hall, along with 85 acres of ground, was purchased by the Backworth Colliery Miners 'Welfare scheme for £8,500. The 3,000 miners who lived in the area paid 6d out of their wages to the Social Fund to keep the place going. The organisation continues to exist today and provides for a wide range of activities including golf, cricket, archery and bowls. The hall is used for weddings and other functions and there is a bar and a beer garden.

In the 1960s a local lay preacher Richard Haswell created the character Geordie Broon of Backworth and his poems in the local dialect were very popular. Here is the first verse of *Polly's Prayer*:

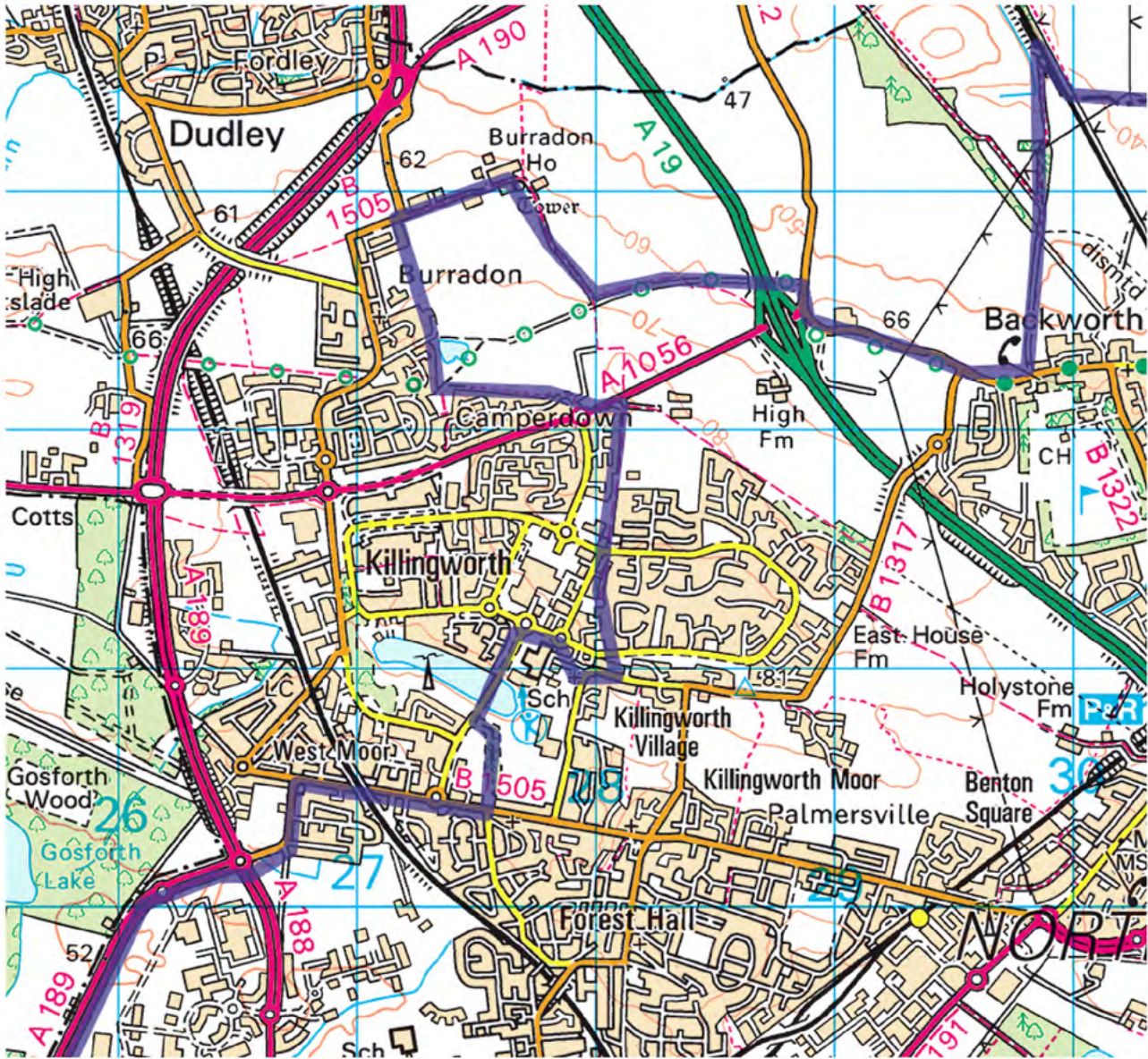
*When Geordie Broon of Backworth got converted and made new,
He sed with aal his evil ways and habits he
waas through. He signed the Pledge of Temperence so he finished drinking beer,
And from that day to this there's not one person heard him sweer.*

Walk along the road for a kilometre, passing West Farm on your right. You then reach a busy road junction, but continue on for a short distance to reach a cycle path on your left to take you safely under the A19. After 600 metres, turn right onto a path that leads you to Burradon. This is an interesting place where you first come to a pele tower that dates from 1552 and was a means of defence against the Border reivers. Turn left here and you will see the well built cottages for the workers at Burradon House, formerly a farm which you pass on your left. This area was once well known for its 'freestone' quarries. Walk on till you reach the B1505. You turn immediately left here onto a waggonway with houses on your right. The area to your left is where Burradon Colliery was once located. It was opened in 1820 and in 1860 there was a major explosion which killed 76 men and boys, the youngest of whom were 10, 11 and 12 years old. You will pass a small lake on your left. You are now in Camperdown. Camperdown was originally called Hazelrigg, but was given the name Camperdown to celebrate the naval victory of the British fleet over the Dutch fleet in 1797. The battle took place off the Dutch coast near a village called Camperduin.

Turn left soon after passing the small lake, turn left on a path which takes you round on the north side of the Greenhills housing development with each of its streets named after a local colliery. You come out to the A1056 at a roundabout and the conclusion of this section.

Section 2

Camperdown to Millennium Bridge – 14km



Cross the A1056 at the pedestrian lights. Turn sharp right soon afterwards into Green Lane at the sign for Killingworth Village. You are now on the former waggonway between Burradon and Westmoor collieries on which George and Robert Stephenson tested the *Rocket* steam locomotive before its success in the Rainhill Trials in 1829. The lane takes you through the planned community of Killingworth New Town. Continue along Green Lane through the second underpass and then go left and right and through gates into Killingworth Village opposite the Plough Inn.

Killingworth

The village is thought to be named after *Cylla*, who was probably an Anglo-Saxon. It is thought to have been the site of a 12th century leper hospital. In 1950 it had four working farms and its south facing slopes supported a range of market gardens.

The building of Killingworth New Town began in 1963 on 760 acres of moorland and reclaimed colliery land. It was designed by architect and planner, Roy Gazzard in the form of a hill town with a moat, garths, baileys and gates and a central pedestrianised citadel including shops alongside a communicare building complex with a health centre, library, community centre, sports centre and ecumenical church, opened in 1972. It included huge apartment blocks called Killingworth Towers, but by 1987 they were deemed unsuitable for living in and was demolished and the land subsequently cleared for redevelopment.

Turn right in West Lane and you soon come to the parish church of St John the Evangelist, which opened in 1869. It was designed by Enoch Bassett Keeling who worked in a 'rogue English High Victorian Gothic Revival' style with a polychromatic (multi-coloured) use of building materials, including bands of pink sandstone from the local Clousden Hill quarry. Walk through the churchyard and at the left of the path at the church door, there is the gravestone for Thomas Saint, a world champion 'pot share bowling' champion, a sport which gripped the North East coalfield in the 19th century before football!

Go around the west end of the church and cross over the small lane out onto East Bailey in front of the Communicare Cross, re-erected here from the Church of the Holy Family. The ecumenical church in the Citadel was demolished in 2004. The cross was dedicated in 2014 as a memorial to the fallen of the parish, particularly to the 293 men known to have fallen in World War 1. Walk to the left past the entrance to the High School and to the roundabout with Edwin Straker's sculpture of George Stephenson's first locomotive, the *Blucher*. Turn left into Southgate past the sports centre and over Killingworth Lake, the 'moat' created from mining subsidence ponds and a positive legacy from the Killingworth New Town development.

Soon after crossing the lake, turn left on a tree-lined path that skirts around Westmoor Primary School. When you come to Great Lime Road turn right and at the end of a row of cottages on your right is Dial Cottage, the home of George and Robert Stephenson from 1804 until 1823. It is named after the sundial above the front door, which was made by the Stephensons.

George and Robert Stephenson

George Stephenson (1781-1848) was born in Wylam west of Newcastle to a poor family and he was illiterate until he was 18. In 1801 he started work as a brakesman in the collieries. In 1802 he married Frances Henderson and in 1803, their son Robert was born. In 1804, they moved to Dial Cottage and George again found work as a brakesman taking care of the winding gear at the local pit. In 1805, they had a daughter who only lived for three weeks and in 1806, his wife Frances died of tuberculosis. George's unmarried sister Eleanor came to live in the cottage.

His great talent was first noticed when he repaired a pumping engine at Killingworth High Pit in 1811 and within a couple of years he was the chief enginewright responsible for the machinery in several local pits. In 1815, he pioneered the miner's safety lamp and tested it successfully before Humphry Davy's lamp. Humphry Davy was a recognised scientist and received the acclaim. Many in the establishment could not believe that a working class man could produce something of such quality. George Stephenson's lamp was called the *Geordie lamp* and was used in the north east coal mines. One possible origin of the term 'Geordie' is that the pit men were first called 'Geordies' because of the lamp and that the term extended by the late 19th century to include the general population of the area.

It is particularly as the 'Father of Railways' that George Stephenson is best known. It was he who determined the rail gauge, often called 'Stephenson's gauge' which is still used for most of the world's railways. He built his first locomotive the *Blucher* in 1813 and altogether probably built 16 locomotives in the colliery workshops which were behind Dial Cottage. By the 1820s, Robert was becoming more involved in his father's business. He had much to do with the establishment of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and he was the major partner in the making of the most famous locomotive of them all, the Rocket. It is estimated that Robert was involved in the construction of a third of the country's railway system and this included the design of iconic bridges including the High Level Bridge in Newcastle and the Royal Border Bridge at Berwickon-Tweed. In addition, he was much in demand for his expertise in other countries where he helped to establish railways, including Belgium, Norway, Egypt and France. After Robert died in 1859, Queen Victoria gave permission for his funeral cortege to drive through Hyde Park, an honour normally reserved for royalty. He was buried at Westminster Abbey. Between them, it would be no exaggeration to say that father and son had revolutionised the world.

Go ahead and cross over at the traffic lights, passing the Lidl supermarket on your right, built on the site of Westmoor Colliery which closed in 1882. Walk on under the bridge carrying the Newcastle to Berwick railway, which opened in 1850 with George Stephenson as engineer. Terraced miners cottages, which were part of the colliery village, stood on either side of the bridge. Cross over at the pedestrian lights and walk on to a mini roundabout where you turn left into Benton Lane.

The road bears to the right to reach a roundabout where you cross on the south side. You will soon find a pedestrian and cycle path on the south east side of the A189 which you will keep on for the next kilometre. Gosforth Wood is on the west side of the A189 and on the far side of it is Newcastle Race Course which opened

in 1882 taking over as home for the 'Northumberland Plate', locally known as 'The Pitmen's Derby', from the course on the Town Moor, which in its turn took over from the race course on Killingworth Moor. As you continue south on the A189, you are walking on Salters Lane. The name Salters Lane is so called because this was on the salt trade route that once existed between Hartley salt pans at Seaton Sluice and Blanchland over to the west.

Walk along here until, soon after passing a roundabout, you cross at a pedestrian crossing and then turn left and right into Heathery Lane. A golf course is on your left.

When you come to a T-junction, turn left. You cross a bridge and the Ouse Burn is on your left. Go straight on at a mini roundabout and then cross a bridge over the railway. Walk down the hill and when you come to the main road, cross over and bear left to walk up Freeman's Road. After passing a few houses on your right, look out for a signpost indicating the River Tyne as 3 miles away. Walk down this footpath which will lead you down Jesmond Dene to the Ouse Burn.

Jesmond Dene

It is very likely that this steep sided valley has always been well wooded, but from the 18th century, industries started to develop including watermills, quarries and an iron foundry. The dene as we know it today was largely the creation of one of Newcastle's most famous sons, Lord William George Armstrong (1810-1900). Although he started his working life as a solicitor, he always had a keen and inventive mind and in 1845, he designed a hydraulic crane, which proved so successful that he soon became a full time engineer and set up a very successful business. Later he acquired more fame as a gun maker. He predicted that coal production would cease within 200 years and also foretold that future sources of energy would be hydroelectricity and solar power.

In 1835, Armstrong and his wife Margaret built a house by the dene. As they became more wealthy, they bought up large areas of the dene and began its transformation by creating waterfalls, weirs, bridges and rock islands and also planting a variety of exotic species including rhododendron, cedars and Californian redwoods. Twice a week the Armstrongs opened the dene to the public for a small entry fee which was donated to a local hospital. The Armstrongs later focussed their creativity into the development of Craggside near Rothbury and in 1883, they presented Jesmond Dene to the Corporation of Newcastle upon Tyne for the benefit of its citizens. It was formally opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales in the following year.

Keeping the Ouse Burn on your right you will pass a footbridge on your right. Soon after passing a weir, go up some steps to go through a low tunnel at the left of Castles Farm Bridge. Walk down the steps to your right to regain the path beside the burn. Look out for evidence of quarrying up to your left. The sandstone from here was of very high quality and was exported all over the world. After 200 metres, you will pass a moss covered bridge and a tunnel opposite it on your left. The next bridge is a wooden one with stepping stones below it. You pass a cottage on your left and at the end of the wooden railings, fork left to take the higher path above the burn. After 60 metres fork right by a large beech tree and rhododendron bushes and go down to cross the bridge.

You will want to stop here to admire the view upstream of the waterfall. This was created by blasting in the late 1800s by Lord Armstrong to provide the fine view from the bridge. Before you cross the bridge, you may also like to visit the Old Mill. It is thought that a mill has been here since the 13th century, but these buildings are about two hundred years old. After crossing the bridge, walk on with the picnic fields on your right. Pass one bridge on your left then cross the next one which has a smaller bridge below it. The next building you pass is The Fisherman's Lodge which was originally a mill. Immediately after the lodge, fork left by a small pond uphill so that you can then turn right to cross over the next bridge. You are now following signs to St Mary's Chapel. Once you have crossed over, turn sharp left to go up to the left of Lord Armstrong's Banqueting Hall. Continue



round the hall where you will find an oak tree with a plaque beneath it, telling you it was planted by Princess Alexandra when Jesmond Dene was opened to the public on August 20th 1884. The path uphill will lead you to a tunnel under Jesmond Dene Road. Go up some steps and left by some laurel bushes to reach St Mary's Chapel.

St Mary's Chapel and well

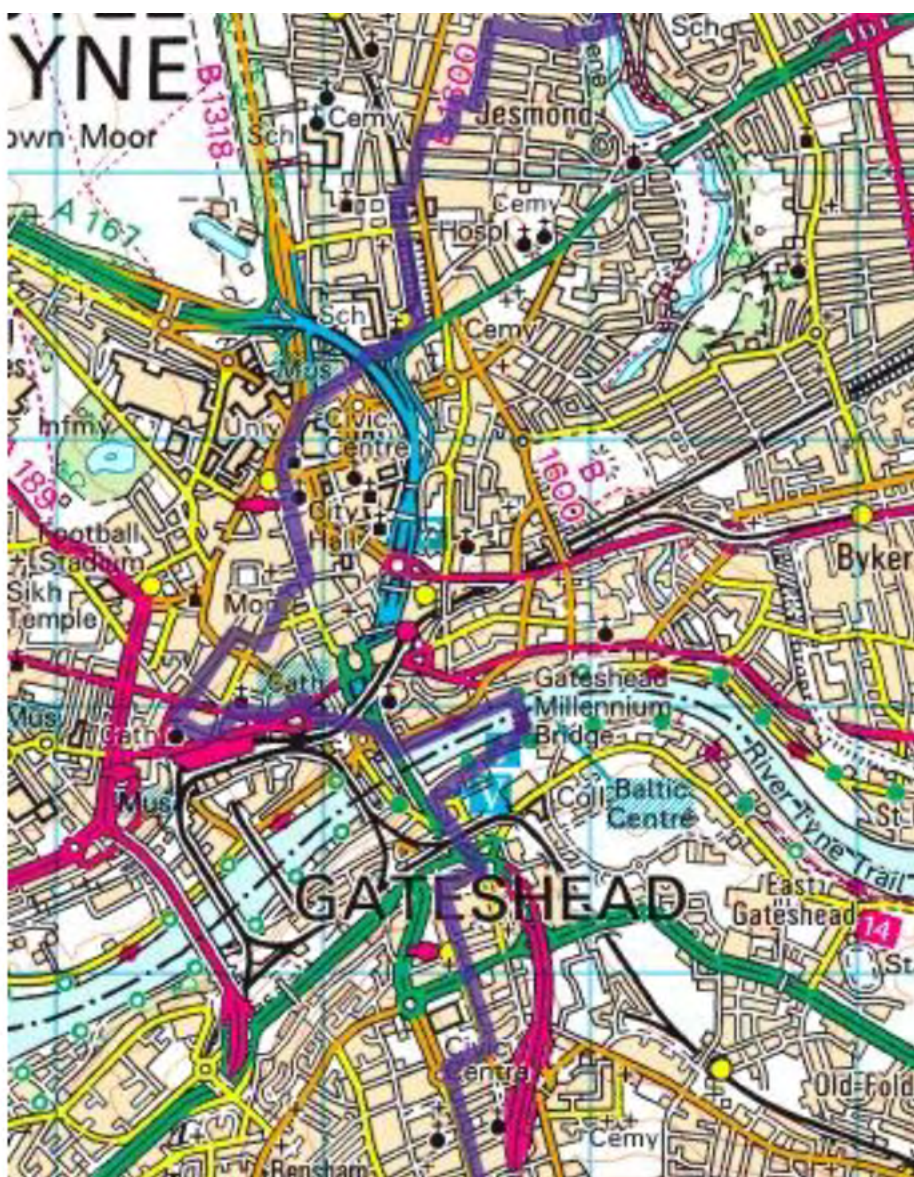
Soon after the Norman invasion, according to local legend, an apparition of the Virgin Mary occurred in Jesmond Dene. It is assumed that she was holding the infant Jesus, because, before the Middle Ages, Jesmond was known as *Gese Muth* meaning "the mouth of the Ouse", whereas afterwards it was known as Jesmond deriving from "Jesus Mound". As a result of this apparition, Jesmond started to attract pilgrims and it was in response to this, that St Mary's Chapel was built in the 12th century. Relics, possibly brought back from the Crusades were housed in the chapel which further increased the volume of pilgrims and the chapel was enlarged in the 14th century. The chapel probably served as a slipper chapel, where pilgrims took off their shoes before walking barefoot down to St Mary's Rock near the old mill in the dene. The significance of this pilgrimage site is indicated by the testimony of a rector from Yorkshire who visited the chapel in 1479 and declared that the shrine was one of the greatest in the kingdom on a par with places like Canterbury and St Paul's Cathedral.

Nearby is St Mary's Well. Information about the origins of the well and miracles that were said to have occurred there, was lost at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. At one time an owner tried to turn the well into a bathing pool, but no sooner had he done so than the water disappeared, which was a just reward for his profaning the holy well! The water however soon returned and it resumed its function as a holy well. It has the word "Gratia" inscribed on the stone above it. This is said to be part of a once longer inscription "*Ave Maria gratia plena*" which is of course "Hail Mary, full of grace."

If you look across the road to your left you will see a lane which is called The Grove. Go along this lane which would have been the old pilgrimage route and very soon on your right you will come to St Mary's Well. Continue along The Grove and the path soon widens where there is a large house on your left. Turn left after it and walk down Queen's Terrace. At the T-junction turn right into Queen's Road. Cross over Grosvenor Place and when you reach the main road, Osborne Road, turn left.

Walk on for about 250 metres and then use the pedestrian crossing to go to the other side. Take the next road on your right and after crossing the railway, turn left into the attractive Eslington Terrace. You will pass a care home called Pilgrims Court which in its website states that, "*The name Pilgrims Court has its origin in the journeys made by pilgrims in the middle ages to the shrine of Saint Mary at Jesus Mound*".

At the end of the terrace walk ahead then fork right, keeping Jesmond metro station on your right. Continue ahead, to pass



Jesmond Parish Church also on your right. The church's official name is the Clayton Memorial Church and is unusual among Anglican parish churches in not being named after either a saint who appears in the church's calendar or a person of the Trinity. This reflects the church's conservative Evangelical roots. Use the underpass beneath the motorway which will bring you out to Windsor Place. Turn right into Jesmond Road West where there is a good view of Newcastle United's ground, St James' Park. This fine road was originally called Carlton Terrace and was built in the 1840s by John Dobson, who also designed Jesmond Parish Church. There is a blue plaque about him at no 11. The road is locally known as Millionaires Row. As you turn the corner into Great North Road you will pass The Hancock Gallery which is the newest gallery in the city and opened on 26th April 2019.

Walk ahead passing Newcastle's Civic Centre, which was designed by George Kenyon and opened by King Olav of Norway in 1968. Notice the seahorses around the tower celebrating Newcastle's maritime links. Next you pass the moving Northumberland Fusiliers War Memorial and then come to the Church of St Thomas the Martyr. Once again this was designed by John Dobson. An unusual feature is the hollow tower. Cross over St Mary's Place at the lights to enter the bustling pedestrianised Northumberland Street, so named because historically it was the main street from the city out to Northumberland. At the end of this street, notice that the street straight across is called Pilgrim Street as it was on the route to St Mary's Chapel and with Northumberland Street was Newcastle's main route in medieval times. In *Grays Chorographia* of 1649 it was described as 'the longest and fairest street in the town', thronging with medieval pilgrim's inns and later coaching inns. You turn right here into Blackett Street to arrive at Grey's Monument.

Grey's Monument

This major city centre landmark was erected in 1838 to commemorate the role of Charles, 2nd Earl Grey, who was then Prime Minister, in the passing of the Great Reform Act in 1832. The 41 metre high Doric column is in some respects a precursor of Nelson's Column which was erected a few years later and indeed Lord Grey and Admiral Nelson were both sculpted by Edward Hodges Baily. The monument was paid for by public subscription. A spiral staircase leads to a viewing platform which is occasionally open to the public. It is no coincidence that rallies against oppression of all kinds tend to start at the monument, as the Reform Act increased the number of those who could vote and reformed Parliament. The Abolition of Slavery took place in the following year.

There are three streets on the other side of the monument and our route goes to the middle one which is Grainger Street. It is named after the builder Richard Grainger (1797-1861), who was largely responsible for shifting the centre of Newcastle northwards from the riverside in a grand plan undertaken between 1820 and 1840. You will pass the Market on your right which was once again designed by John Dobson and which is well worth a visit. It was opened in 1835 and was the largest indoor market in Britain at that time. It is home to Marks and Spencer's Original Penny Bazaar, the world's smallest Marks and Spencer store. Turn right into Nun Street, so called because it was the location of the 12th century Benedictine nunnery of St Bartholomew. Next turn left into Clayton Street.

Cross over Westgate Road into Clayton Street West and on your left you will come to the Catholic Cathedral of St Mary. It was designed by Augustus Pugin, who is best known for designing the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben. The cathedral opened in 1844 as the cathedral for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. On the east side of the cathedral, there is a memorial garden which features a statue of Cardinal Basil Hume, standing on an outline of the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. He was greatly loved in Newcastle and wrote a significant book about the Northern Saints. Walk on east along Neville Street. Newcastle Central Station is on the other side of the road. It is yet another superb design by John Dobson and is widely considered as one of the finest railway stations in the country. It was opened by Queen Victoria in 1850. Turn left into Grainger Street again to visit St John the Baptist Church.

St John the Baptist Church

It is thought that the first church here was built around 1130 with stones from Hadrian's Wall. Nothing apart from a rounded Norman window in the chancel remains from that church. The church we see today was built c. 1287. Interesting features include fragments of medieval glass with the earliest known representation of the arms of Newcastle in the Lady Chapel and a squint which enabled the anchorite whose cell was above the sacristy to see the altar.

From St John's Church continue east along Collingwood Street, named after the Newcastle born Admiral Collingwood, before crossing over to Newcastle Cathedral.

Newcastle Cathedral

The actual location of the first parish church of St Nicholas is not known. It is possible that a church was built close to the Castle (which was created in timber just after the Norman occupation then in stone by 1180) and served the growing community which grew up around it. It is likely that once the early settlement around the Castle out-grew its location and the burgeoning town of Newcastle started developing further up the hill northwards, a new parish church was created in the current location.

It is dedicated to St Nicholas, the patron saint of a variety of groups including sailors, children, brewers and surgeons. There is little evidence of the early church inside and most of the current building is of the Perpendicular style (fashionable in the 14th and 15th centuries). It is likely that the town's early business-people funded the building of the church; Robert and Alice Rhodes paid for the iconic Lantern Tower to be built in the 14th century and their coats of arms can still be seen on the inside of the tower and round the font. By the end of the 15th century the structure of the church was much like it is today.

The church of St Nicholas was the largest of the four parish churches in the town and evidence of its importance and influence can be seen in the many hundreds of wall and floor memorials which commemorate notable figures in the town's history including leading industrialists and business-people. These were individuals who in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries were shaping the rapid growth of the town through mining, commerce and international trade – the names of Ridley, Bewick, Blakett, Thornton and Clavering can be seen not only on the walls of the Cathedral but in the street names around Newcastle.

In 1553 an attempt was made to create a City of Newcastle, incorporating Gateshead and dividing the Diocese of Durham, by creating a Bishopric of Newcastle based at St Nicholas Church. Alas, Queen Mary, on her accession, reversed the legislation and St Nicholas Church had to wait for 329 years to pass before becoming a Cathedral Church (and England's most northerly cathedral) on 25th July 1882, when the new Diocese of Newcastle was created. Newcastle Cathedral is the only English Cathedral which is dedicated to St Nicholas. It is the Mother Church of the Diocese and prides itself on its inclusive welcome and creative interpretation which tells the story of those who have shaped the city and region.

When you leave the cathedral, go to the south west side and fork left into a road called Side which was one of Newcastle's original medieval streets noted for its shops and stalls. This takes you past the Black Gate part of the castle on your right.

Newcastle Castle

In 1080, Robert Curthose, the eldest son of William the Conqueror built a 'castle of earth and wood' on the site of the Roman fort that had previously existed there by the Roman bridge. In 1172, the 'new castle' which gives the city its name, was built with the stone keep. The castle was built both as a defence against Scottish raids and also to keep the unruly locals under control! In 1095, Robert de Mowbray, the Earl of Northumbria led a rebellion against King William Rufus, who sent his army up to crush the rebellion. After that time, the castle became crown property from which the powerful northern barons could be kept under control. The medieval walled town grew around the castle.

Apart from the keep, the other building that survives from the castle complex is the fortified gatehouse called the Black Gate which was added in 1250. It originally consisted of two towers with a passage between them and a vaulted guardroom above. There was a drawbridge both at the front and rear and a portcullis at the entrance also. It was substantially rebuilt during the 17th century and by the early 19th century it had become a slum tenement, housing up to sixty people. It was restored in the 1880s by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne. The 23 metre gap between the two buildings is filled by the railway viaduct

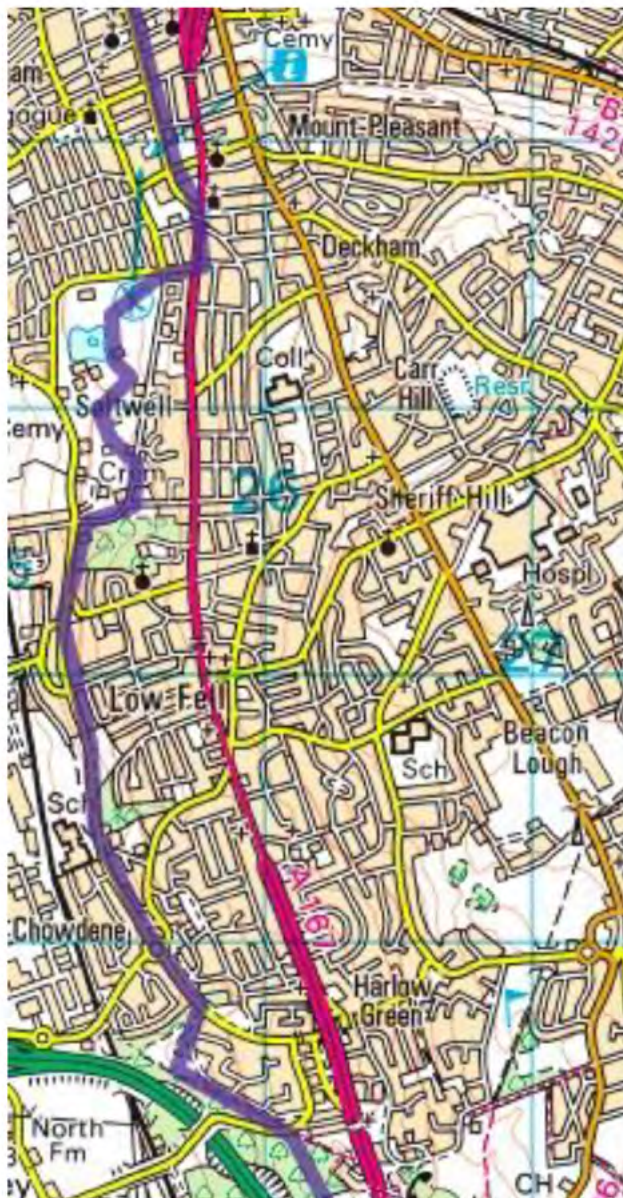
Continue under the railway and past the Guildhall to the quayside. Turn left here walking under the iconic Tyne Bridge which was opened by King George V in 1929. It was made by the Middlesbrough firm Dorman Long, who also used it as the model for the much larger Sydney Harbour Bridge. Go on to the Millennium Bridge which you cross over. The Millennium Bridge was opened in 2001. It is a tilt bridge allowing vessels up to 25 metres to pass underneath. The bridge takes less than 5 minutes to rotate through the full 40° from closed to open. Its appearance during this manoeuvre has led to it being nicknamed the "Blinking Eye Bridge". The design is so energy efficient that, in April 2017, it cost just £3.96 per opening.

Section 3

Millennium Bridge to the Angel of the North – 8km

The Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art is on your left. It was originally built as a flour mill which closed in 1981. In 1994, the architect Dominic Williams won a competition to convert the building into the stunning building we see today, which opened in 2002. In 2011, it became the first Turner Prize venue outside London. Walk up across the car parks to reach The Sage – yet another extraordinary building which is made from panels of curved stainless steel with three huge glass windows facing the river. It opened in 2004 and is home to the Northern Sinfonia Orchestra and to Folkworks, who maintain the unique folk music traditions of the North East. You can walk straight through the Sage, but you may well want to pause to enjoy the ambience as well as the views. When you leave, you will see St Mary's Church ahead of you. The church dates from the 12th century and for many years was Gateshead's only church. It is now a heritage centre with permanent and changing displays about Gateshead's history.

From St Mary's, walk on the eastern side of the Tyne Bridge road and go under the railway before using the lights by the roundabout to cross over into Lambton Street. Turn left into the pedestrianised West Street. You will pass Gateshead Metro station. Continue into High West Street and you will come to Gateshead Council Offices. After passing the car park, turn right into Arthur Street and then left into Prince Consort Road.



Gateshead Jewish Community

As you walk up this road, you are quite likely to see a number of Orthodox Jews. Gateshead is home to one of the few growing communities of Orthodox Jews in Britain. The Jewish community here began in the late nineteenth century when refugees from Eastern Europe came here. There was a large influx of refugees also during the Nazi era and it became an important centre for Torah Judaism. There are now some 8,000 Jews in Gateshead. The Gateshead Yeshiva or seminary has a very good reputation and attracts students from all over the world.

After passing the library, you will come to the Shipley Art Gallery. The gallery was opened in 1917 with 504 paintings given by a local solicitor Joseph Shipley. It is a leading gallery for craft and design and includes the Henry Rothschild Collection of studio ceramics. The best known paintings in the gallery are Tintoretto's *Christ Washing the Disciples Feet* and *The Blaydon Races* by William Irving.

Soon after the gallery, turn right into Edendale Terrace with tennis courts and a park on your right. Turn left into Avenue Road and at the end of that road cross over and enter into Saltwell Park. This most attractive park was opened in 1876 and quickly became known as "The People's Park." The estate had belonged to William



Wailes who sold it to Gateshead Council for £35,000. The park was designed by William Kemp. After the park had fallen into disrepair, it was restored between 1999 and 2005 by a £9.6 million Heritage Lottery grant and now receives 2 million visitors a year. The accompanying map suggests a way through to the south end of the park.

You now have a walk of a kilometre and a half along the east side of Saltwell Road until you reach a roundabout by the Gold Medal pub. Take the second exit into a road called Hertford and after 200 metres you will find a path off to the right which goes down to join a cycle path. This is a former railway where you turn left to ascend steadily. After 450 metres, you cross a road and continue on the cycle path until you come towards a bridge under the A167. Fork up to the right here before the bridge and turn right along the A167. You will soon reach The Angel of the North on your right.

The Angel of the North

The Angel of the North occupies the former site of the colliery baths for the Team Colliery which operated between the 1720s and the 1960s. The site was reclaimed in 1989 and it was decided that the site should become home to a landmark sculpture. In 1994, the sculptor Antony Gormley was chosen to create what was destined to become Britain's most well known piece of public art. The sculpture was manufactured of steel in Hartlepool and was transported in three sections on low loaders in a journey which took five hours. After assembly it opened on February 16th 1998.

The statistics of the statue are awe-inspiring in themselves. It is as high as four double decker buses and the wings are as wide as a jumbo jet. It can withstand winds of over 100mph and is anchored by concrete 21 metres below ground. The ribbed human figure, which is modelled on Gormley's body weighs 100 tonnes and each of the wings weighs 50 tonnes. Messages Gormley wanted to convey through the sculpture included the transition from an industrial age to an information age as angels are communicators, and also a focus for the hopes and fears of people in the region. It is estimated that the Angel of the North is seen by 34 million people each year.

Section 4

Angel of the North to Chester-le-Street – 13km

Cross over the A167 at the lights by the car park and turn right. After 250 metres turn left into Low Eighton passing Eighton Lodge Care Home on your right and the Angel View Inn on your left. Eighton appropriately means 'high settlement'. You soon come out to a drive where you turn right. Cross carefully over Long Bank to the footpath opposite. This crosses a field then forks left to come to a former road where you turn right. The path comes right up to the A1 and then leads you via steps down to the Bowes Railway Path. The railway was originally built to carry coal to the Tyne. The first section was



built by George Stephenson and it opened in 1826. At its height it was carrying over a million tons of coal a year.

Turn left to go under the long tunnel under the A1, keeping to the left hand side of the tunnel which is more level than the centre and right. You have now for the second time joined the Tyne and Wear Heritage Way. Walk on for a kilometre under more tunnels and crossing the River Team and Greenfield Lane before reaching the entrance to a nature reserve on your left. This was formerly the site of clay pits and brick works and was then a landfill in the 1990s before its transformation into a nature reserve. At this point, you can either continue along the railway path for 400 metres until you reach Kibblesworth where you turn left down Clarty Lane, or walk through the nature reserve following these directions:

After entering the reserve by a large boulder, walk parallel to the railway path for about 150 metres till you reach a T-junction where you turn left. There is a plantation on your left and rough land on your right. After 400 metres, take the second path on your right. There are some ponds on your left which you may find are dried up. This path will eventually lead you out to Clarty Lane where you turn left.

After passing some more mature woodland called Beggardene Wood on your left you come out from Clarty Lane into a field. At the next field boundary, turn right with the hedge on your right. Walk on the track to Riding Farm passing a wood on your left. Walk out on the farm road for a short distance before taking the first path on your left. Follow the field boundary as you head down into the Team valley skirting left and right and keeping the wood on your right.

After crossing a footbridge, walk straight over in the middle of a long field to the opposite side. The start of the footpath on that side can sometimes be rather obscured by the growth of policeman's helmet by the River Team, but you should soon find your way to a better path which leads up through the woods to come out into a field. Keep Urpeth North Farm buildings to your left and you will soon find a stile out onto the road where you turn right. The settlement here is called High Urpeth and the larger village of Urpeth is a kilometre further east.

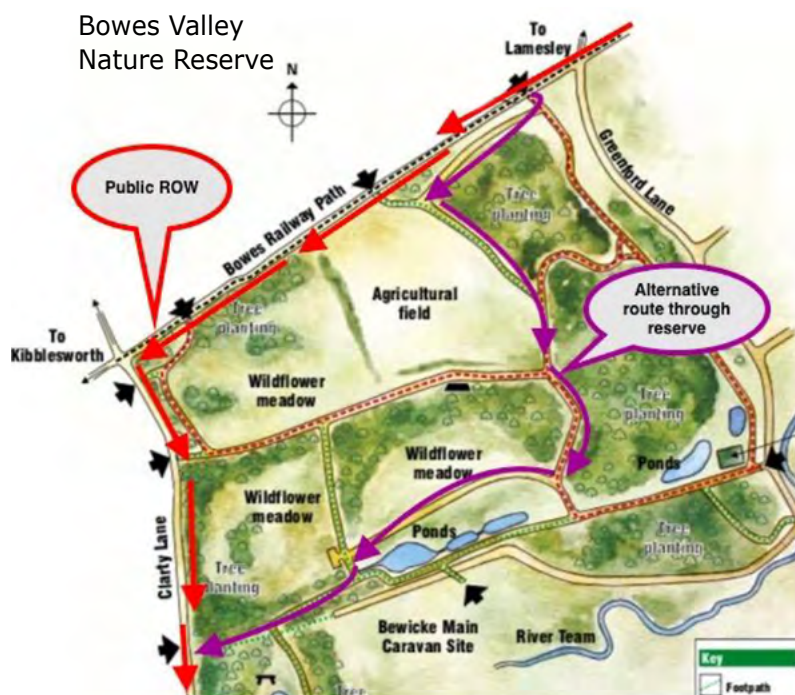
Urpeth

The unusual name of this village has an interesting origin and means 'path of the urus'. The *urus* was the old name for the auroch, which was similar to a bison and used to roam in this region long ago. It has an interesting successor in that there is reputed to be a mysterious animal, possibly a wild cat, called the 'beast of the Urpeth mist' which roams the area today.

Urpeth is mentioned in the Bolden Book with is Co Durham's equivalent of the Domesday Book in 1183. It states that Urpeth was expected to provide a 'tun' of wine for the Bishop of Durham "at any place in the land between the Tyne and Tees where he might request it". Urpeth Hall in High Urpeth dates from the 18th century but was considerably altered in 1890.

A road goes off to your right at the bend and immediately after it, take the footpath on your right along a pleasant lane which ascends by the woodland beside Urpeth Common. When you reach the top of the hill you will pass a cottage on your right. Go left here and take a path on your left just before the bridge. This path will soon lead you down to the Consett and Sunderland Railway Path, where you turn left, but if you have time, you may want to turn right to visit the famous Beamish Museum which is close by.

You now have a straightforward walk of 4 kilometres along the railway path which follows the line of the former Stanhope & Tyne Railway. This was Britain's first commercial railway, which was closed in 1985. There are good open views back across the Team valley to the Newcastle suburbs. You pass under the A693 at Pelton.



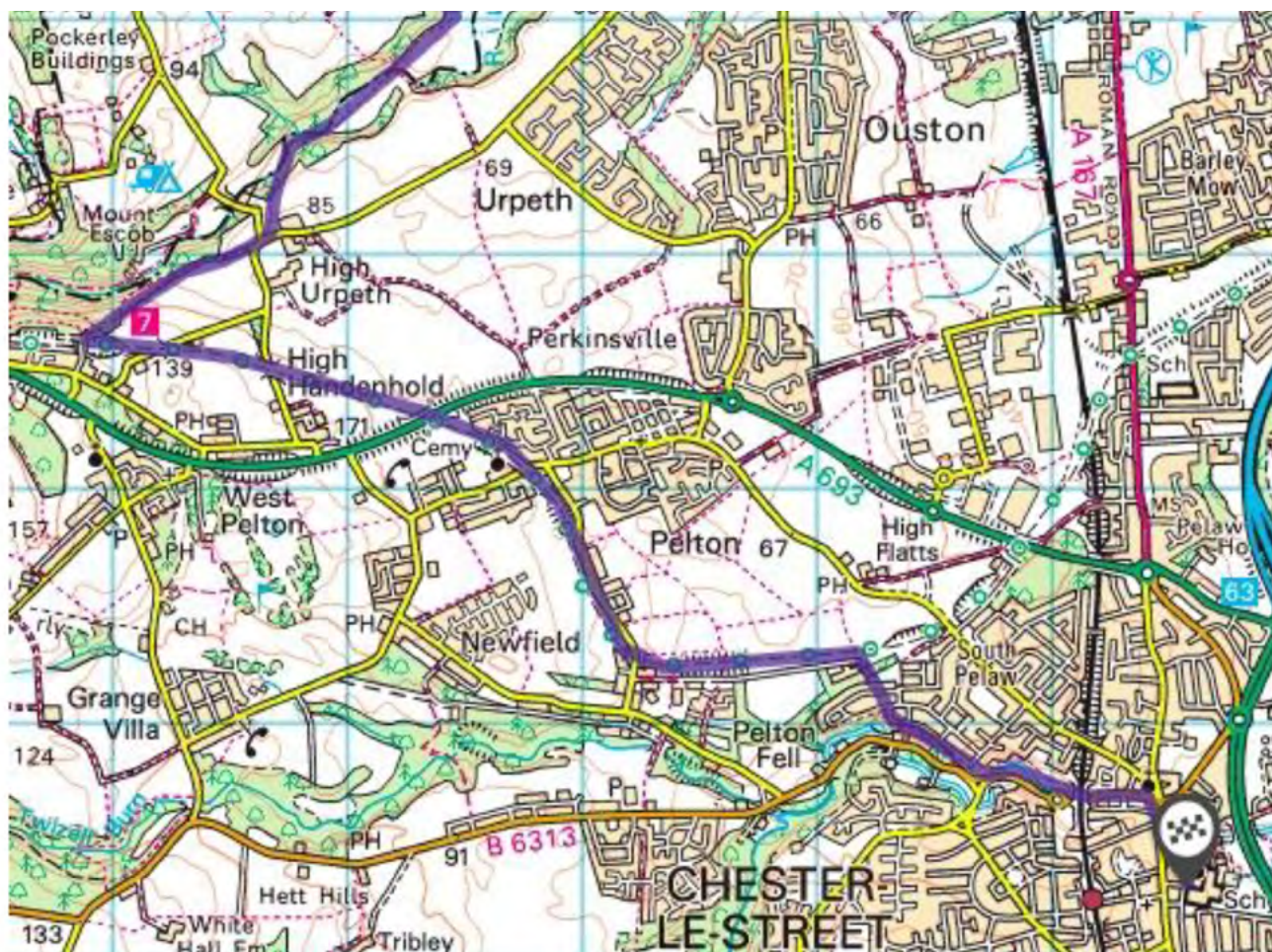
Thomas Hepburn of Pelton

Thomas Hepburn was a forerunner of the Trade Union movement who deserves to be better known. He was born in Pelton in 1796. His father was killed in a mining accident, leaving a wife and three small children, Thomas being the eldest. He had a scanty education, but by the age of eight when he went to work at Urpeth colliery, he was able to read the Bible. He soon moved to Fatfield colliery. At every opportunity he sought to further his education and he attended night school after work. He joined the Primitive Methodists and became an active local preacher, learning much about public speaking and organisation.

In 1820 he married and moved first to Jarrow colliery and then to the newly opened Hetton colliery where in 1825, he formed *The Colliers of the United Association of Durham and Northumberland*, which was colloquially known as Hepburn's Union. The first industrial action he led was a strike for improved conditions which was largely successful, reducing working hours from 18 hours a day to a 12 hour shift as well as ensuring that miners received wages in money. Before that time, they had to use 'Tommy Shops', which were a system whereby miners had to purchase provisions from shops approved by mine owners, with wages being confiscated to pay off the shop owner before the employee could directly receive them. At one critical moment during negotiations, Hepburn went to meet the mine owner Lord Londonderry. Before the meeting Hepburn said he never started negotiations without first seeking divine guidance. He asked Lord Londonderry to kneel down while he prayed and he obliged!

In 1832, Hepburn led further strike action when employers threatened not to employ those involved in the union. This time the strike was much more bitter and, despite Hepburn's best efforts to prevent violence, some miners attacked non-unionised miners from Cumberland, who had been brought in to replace them and a South Shields magistrate died after being beaten up by a striking miner. The mine owners held firm and the union crumbled as miners realised the need for a wage to live on was greater than the principle of trade union solidarity.

After this, Hepburn was scapegoated by the authorities and banned from working in the coalfields. He was reduced to trying to sell tea to make a living. He was eventually re-employed at Felling colliery on condition that he did not engage in any union activity, but he was able to be active in radical political circles, including involvement with the Chartists. He died in December 1864 and is buried in Heworth churchyard.



Soon after the path turns east by an industrial estate, you will pass the quirky King Coal sculpture made by David Kemp of recycled bricks, mining shovels and a colliery fan impeller. By sheer coincidence the sculpture was completed on October 15th 1992, which was the same day that the closure of the last of Durham's coal mines was announced. About 400 metres after King Coal, you will find a footpath off to the right.

Go over the bridge ahead of you and pass a recreation area on your left. Walk through the housing estate and when you see woodland ahead of you cross the road and go diagonally left into Maplewood. Walk on for 300 metres using the grass verge on the right hand side. Where the road turns left, go straight on down some steps to Pelton Fell Road. Almost immediately fork left on a path which follows the Chester Burn on your right. Walk under the viaduct and the path will lead you out onto the road by the market place where you walk ahead to the lights. Cross over towards GW Horners Pub and take the road to its left. At the next junction with a mini roundabout turn right and walk uphill. Follow the road round left and right to reach your destination at St Mary & St Cuthbert's Church.

Chester-le-Street

The town derives its name from the Latin word *castra* meaning a fort and the street refers to the Roman road which still runs north to south in what is now called Front Street. The Romans built their fort called *Concangis* here around 100 AD. In those days the River Wear was navigable up to this point, so it was probably an important supply depot for other Roman garrisons in the area. The Romans left in 410.

During the Anglo-Saxon period this became the most important town between the Tyne and the Tees and this was particularly the case when the monks fled from Lindisfarne with the precious coffin of St Cuthbert and, after many wanderings, finally settled here in 882. They built a wooden shrine and a church most probably using stone from the Roman fort. For 113 years Chester-le-Street was the home of the Bishops of Lindisfarne, the forerunners of the Prince Bishops of Durham, so the church was a cathedral. There was a constant stream of pilgrims to the shrine including England's first king, Athelstan, in 934 and the Viking king of Norway and York with the fearsome name of Eric Bloodaxe in 952. One of the bishops at this time, Aldred, commissioned the first translation of the Bible into English. It was translated in the margins of the Lindisfarne gospels which were in Latin and there is a facsimile copy of it in the church. After the removal of St Cuthbert's shrine to Durham in 995, the town was still a powerful place until it was largely destroyed by the Normans in revenge for the killing of Bishop Walcher in 1080.

The church of St Mary and St Cuthbert has one of the best preserved anchorages in the country called Ankers House. An anchorite was an extreme hermit, walled in to the anchorage with only a slit to see the altar in the church and an opening to receive food. There were six anchorites there between 1383 and 1538.

By the early nineteenth century, Chester-le-Street had become a major staging post on the Great North Road and many inns sprang up to serve travellers and their horses. Also during the nineteenth century the town became an important centre in relation to coal in terms of collection and distribution and serving the needs of surrounding mining villages and towns.

Acknowledgements

In my research for inserts on local history, I have used a wide variety of sources, but would particularly like to acknowledge the usefulness of England's North East website, where more detailed information about places on the route can be found – <https://englandsnortheast.co.uk/>

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For more information on the Northern Saints Trails, see northernsaints.com

