



Many of the sculptures can be seen on a 6 mile walk from Watergate Forest Park to Kibblesworth along the Bowes and Tanfield Railway Paths. Whilst a linear walk the public transport links to and from Gateshead Town Centre are good and there is also the possibility of cycling the whole route or of walking sections and visiting the many 'nature reserves' as part of a shorter visit.

Whilst walking the Bowes and Tanfield Railway Paths you can expect to experience easy to use and to follow surfaced paths. There are some gradients on these Railway Paths reflecting the old railway inclines. You may also encounter squeeze stiles and steps in some places.

Some suggestions of other walks across the countryside are shown on the illustrated map in this leaflet but as not all public paths are indicated it is recommended that Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps are consulted when walking in the wider area. You should also be aware that country paths vary in condition and may sometimes be muddy etc.

For more information on walks, events and public rights of way see www.gateshead.gov.uk/country/country and www.walk4life.info

For Cycling in Gateshead see www.cycle-routes.org/cycle-gateshead



Walking and cycling



Introduction

The countryside around central and south Gateshead is one of the area's best kept secrets. Once a landscape dominated by coal mining and the development of the world's first railways the countryside here is now an attractive and fascinating place to visit.

There are a surprisingly wide range of outdoor facilities with open access including woodlands, parks and nature reserves. Here, in just a short bus ride from Gateshead Town Centre, you can walk, watch wildlife, look out for the signs of our industrial heritage, marvel at surprising sculptures and escape from the stresses of modern life.

Whilst this area has seen enormous landscape change it still offers a glimpse of our industrial past and a time when it was the most important place in the world for the production of coal and the development of the first railways. A number of sites and attractions celebrating our industrial past can be visited in the area including the world's oldest operating railway.

This area of Gateshead is also a surprisingly fantastic place to see wildlife and offers a wide range of accessible places to visit ranging from ancient woodlands to newly created wetlands and meadows. Many of these sites are owned and managed by Gateshead Council which also runs a varied event programme throughout the year.

In addition this area, in the shadow of the Angel of the North, has over a 20 year history of placing sculptures in the landscape to add interest and delight. This work first started in 1991 with the Marking the Ways project and carries on today - continuing to use artworks to waymark Gateshead's surprising countryside.



History

Coal has been mined from the Whickham area since at least the 12th century, originally from a large number of Bell Pits like those discovered at Lotte's Wood. Mining was so profitable that in 1582 Queen Elizabeth I purchased the the 'Whickham Grand Lease' from the Church before passing it on to her favorite Lord Dudley.

The coal was transported by packhorse to the River Tyne at Dunston where it was loaded onto small boats or keels for transportation to bulk coal carrying collier ships.

With the expansion of mining coal began to be transported in horse-drawn waggon's known as wains along specially constructed tracks or ways. In 1621 a coal mining consortium laid the Whickham Grand Lease Way - the first wooden wagonway in the north east. By this time the Whickham area was the largest producer of coal in the world.

The co-operation of a group of coal owners, including George Bowes from Gibside, into a powerful partnership known as the Grand Allies enabled the building of the world's first railway bridge at Causey Arch in 1777 to transport coal from collieries near Tanfield. They named the railway - The Tanfield Way.

In 1839 work began to replace the timber rails with an iron rail and three static steam engines to haul waggons. You can see an example of these engines at the Bowes Railway Museum. Three balanced inclines allowed loaded waggons travelling down the slope to pull up the empty ones at the same time. In 1881 steam locomotives were introduced replacing the static engines.

Marking the Ways



Explore the art, history and wildlife in the great outdoors of south and central Gateshead.

Bowes Railway Museum

The only operational preserved, standard gauge, rope-hauled railway in the world. Springwell Village, NE9 8QJ 0191 416 1847

For more information on local history see Sunnisdale and Whickham and District Local History Society

www.sunnisdalelocalhistorysociety.co.uk

Local History Online and Gateshead Heritage at St Mary's both at www.gateshead.gov.uk

Tanfield Railway

With an unparalleled history dating back to 1725, spectacular scenery and a truly unique atmosphere, Tanfield Railway is the North East's largest and most popular steam railway.

A great day out for families and history fans alike, Europe's oldest working engine shed, the world's oldest railway bridge and a ride on the world's oldest railway makes a visit to the Railway a must for anyone with an interest in our railway heritage.

Location - off the A6076 south of Sunnisdale 0845 463 4938

www.tanfieldrailway.co.uk

www.bowesrailway.co.uk

Railway.

In 1971 a group of local enthusiasts began working towards the Tanfield Way had ceased to operate and was reclaimed as a recreational path. In 1964 most of the When Watergate Colliery closed in 1964 most of the Second World War the seven collieries served by the Tanfield Way port in the UK with the decline of the coal industry from the end of cargo left Dunston every year making the small village the third largest coal production reached its peak in 1923 when 7 million tonnes of

what is now the Bowes Railway Path.

In 1855 John Bowes and Charles Palmer, frustrated with the service to the Staithes at Jarrow. This 'Pontop and Jarrow Railway' ran along from the private Brandling Railway Company, built their own line direct

Useful Information

For tourist, events and public art information see Discover Gateshead at www.gateshead.gov.uk 0191 478 422 or email toursim@gateshead.gov.uk

For public transport information contact Traveline Northeast - 0870 608 2608 www.traveline.info

For information on walking and wildlife see www.gateshead.gov.uk/countryside

For information on cycling see www.cycle-routes.org/cycle-gateshead 0191 433 3082

OS Maps - Explorer Maps 308 (Durham and Sunderland) and 318 (Newcastle)

This leaflet was produced by the Natural Environment Team Development and Enterprise, Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead Council NE8 1HH, 0191 433 3443 email countryside@gateshead.gov.uk

Get Involved!

If you are over 18 and would like to have fun caring for and learning about Gateshead's countryside then why not join Gateshead Volunteer Countryside Rangers. 0191 433 3524, www.gateshead.gov.uk/countryside



The map in the centre of this leaflet shows over 20 different green spaces, nature reserves, woodlands, parks and gardens for you to discover wildlife.

For more information on sites and wildlife see www.gateshead.gov.uk/countryside and also www.gatesheadbirders.co.uk

Even the Railway Paths which link these various nature reserves together are important wildlife corridors. This includes part of the Bowes Railway Path along the former Birkhead's Mineral line which is designated as a Local Wildlife Site because it reminds us of how the area looked before industrialisation and the intensification of agriculture.

Over recent years the area of central and south Gateshead has become a surprisingly good area to see wildlife and especially for bird watchers. With a wide range of different nature reserves to visit.



Wildlife



Art

Marking the Ways - an art project first launched in 1991 aims to encourage visitors to the countryside of south Gateshead. The programme began in Kibblesworth and worked with local people to produce the original Marking the Ways sculptures.

In 1996 'The Four Seasons' brought four well known European Sculptors to the area to produce new artworks as part of the Year of Visual Arts.

When a derelict school in Kibblesworth was converted to the Kibblesworth Village Millennium Centre in 2000 a series of specially commissioned artworks were installed in and around the Centre.

In 2009 a further series of sculptures were added to existing works at Watergate Forest Park, to Hedley Hall Wood and along the railway paths to replace some of the original Marking the Ways timber sculptures which had naturally come to the end of their lives.

To find out where you can see all of the Marking The Ways sculptures look at the map in the centre of this leaflet.



Woods, Nature Reserves, Countryside, Picnic Sites, Gardens and Parks

FOR WEB INFORMATION FOR THE FOLLOWING SITES SEE

Gateshead Council www.gateshead.gov.uk/countryside
 Durham County Council www.durham.gov.uk/countryside
 Woodland Trust www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Banesley Lane Woodland (Gateshead Council)

Woodland with a circular walk and views towards the Angel.
 Banesley Lane west of Lamesley, 0191 433 3443

Beamish Burn Picnic Area (Durham County Council)

Open on school and bank holidays.
 Near Beamish Hall, off Beamishburn Road, 0191 372 9100

Bensham Butterfly Station (Gateshead Council)

Small wildlife garden. Group visits by arrangement.
 Elysium Lane, Bensham, 0191 433 3443

Birkhead's Secret Gardens and Nursery

Green Tourism awarded Gardens and Tea Room a short walk from the Bowes Railway Path.
 Birkhead's Lane, Sunnyside, NE16 5EL, 01207 232 262
www.birkheadssecretgardens.co.uk

Bowes Valley Nature Reserve (SITA)

A former clay pit and landfill site now a nature reserve.
 Excellent for butterflies and dragonflies. Landfill gas is used to generate electricity. Greenfold Lane, Kibblesworth.
 Leaflet download at www.gateshead.gov.uk/countryside

Burdon Moor (Gateshead Council)

Project to recreate a lowland heath - now a wildlife haven for birds and insects. Includes circular path and small sculptures.
 Access is from the Bowes Railway Path, 0191 433 3443

Causey Arch Wood (Durham County Council)

Home to the world's oldest surviving single arch railway bridge.
 Off the A6076, 0191 372 9100

Cross Lane Meadows (Gateshead Council)

Traditionally managed wildflower meadows and young woodland opposite the MetroCentre. Spectacular display of Cowslips in spring.
 Access from Market Lane, Swallowwell, 0191 433 3443

Dunston Pond Local Nature Reserve (Gateshead Council)

A small pond in an industrial area near the MetroCentre.
 Off Wellington Road, Dunston (near railway bridge) 0191 433 3443

Eden Place Picnic Area (Durham County Council)

Close to Beamish Museum with great access to paths.
 Off the A693 just south of Beamish Museum, 0191 372 9100

Gateshead Local Parks

There are a wide range of refurbished parks in urban Whickham, Gateshead, Bensham and Dunston. Highlights include Clasper Towers Adventure Playground, Bensham Grove Park, Chase Park, Beggarswood Park and Windmill Hills Town Park.

Hedley Hall Farm Wood (Woodland Trust)

A popular mix of young and Ancient Woodland.
 In 2009 local artist Keith Barrett installed two new sculptures.
 Hedley Lane near Sunnyside.

Hellhole Wood (Woodland Trust)

A conifer planted ancient woodland site. Adjacent to the Consett and Sunderland Railway Path south of Beamish Museum.

Lamesley Pastures (Gateshead Council)

This project to create traditional winter flood meadows gets better each year for birdwatching. Access to the 'East Field' is to a hide only. Keys to the hide can be bought from the Development and Enterprise Reception at the Civic Centre and Thornley Woodlands Centre. The 'West Field', (rear of the Hotel) offers a short walk in a pretty setting.

Access and parking at the car park of the Ravensworth Arms Hotel, Lamesley. PLEASE DO NOT PARK ON ROADS 0191 433 3443



Location of Marking the Ways artworks

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1. Flames to Flowers - Graham Hopper | 9. I am Not a Knot - Gilbert Ward | 18. Frog - Gilbert Ward | 27. Stone Insect - Gilbert Ward |
| 2. Greenheart - William Pym | 10. Floral Piece - Gilbert Ward | 19. Flower Stone - J Kay Aplin, Sunnyside Local History Society | 28. Stone Insect - Gilbert Ward |
| 3. Floating Rocks - Colin Rose | 11. Giant's Feet - Felicity Watts | 20. Carved Seat - Gilbert Ward | 29. Standing Stone - Gilbert Ward |
| 4. Out of the Darkness - Jim Roberts | 12. Waggonway Relief - Felicity Watts | 21. September - Gilbert Ward | 30. Come Rain, Wind or Shine - Richard Caink |
| 5. Oak Leaf and Acorn seats - Jim Roberts | 13. Footprints - Felicity Watts | 22. Carved Seat - Kibblesworth Carvers | 31. Avian Form - Gilbert Ward |
| 6. Cracklet Seat - Jim Roberts | 14. Museum Piece - Felicity Watts | 23. Circling Partridges - Graciela Ainsworth | 32. West Wind - Laurent Raynes |
| 7. Sculptural Markers - Jim Roberts | 15. Walk - Matthew Jarrett | 24. Summer Seat - Keith Barrett | 33. Burnt Wood Seat - Bruce Tuckley |
| 8. Bulbous Form - Gilbert Ward | 16. Totem Poles - Kibblesworth Carvers | 25. Winter Seat - Keith Barrett | 34. Reptilian Form - Gilbert Ward |
| | 17. Butterfly Stone - J Kay Aplin, Sunnyside Local History Society | 26. Stone Insect - Gilbert Ward | 35. Foliate Form - Gilbert Ward |

Lamesley Reedbed (Northumbrian Water)

The Reedbed was installed to improve water quality in the River Team. Uses a pioneering system - to remove minewater pollution using microbes fed on effluent from sewage works. No public access but some of the 100 species of birds can be viewed from the Bowes Railway Path.
 Bowes Railway Path - off Greenfold Lane, Kibblesworth

Longacre Wood (Gateshead Council)

Visit three ages of woodland in Gateshead's best Bluebell wood.
 Between the A1 and Lamesley, from Smithy Lane.
 01207 545212

Lottie's Wood (Woodland Trust)

Woodland named after local character Lottie Brabban. Monument on rare 'bell pit' mines. Off the A692 at Streetgate.

Norwood Nature Park (Gateshead Council)

Part of Gateshead's 1990 National Garden Festival site. Events are sometimes held. Group visits by arrangement only.
 Swallowtail Drive, Festival Park, off Lobley Hill Road, 0191 433 3441

Ousbrough Wood (Gateshead Council)

A magical ancient woodland with a surprising industrial past.
 Access from High Forge near Beamish, 0191 433 3443

Riverside Park (Gateshead Council)

Green corridor along the River Tyne with 13 large sculptures by important artists including Andy Goldsworthy.

Saltwell Park (Gateshead Council)

A £9 million restoration and a host of awards makes the 'People's Park' one of Britain's best parks. The 55 acres includes ornamental and woodland gardens, a boating lake, sports facilities, play areas, public art, an education centre and a café in the beautiful Victorian Saltwell Towers.
 East Park Road, NE9 5AX. Car park off Joicey Road, 0191 433 7000

Sunnyside Park (Gateshead Council)

Local wildlife site with woodland and meadows.
 Burnt house Lane Sunnyside 01207 545212

Watergate Forest Park Local Nature Reserve (Gateshead Council)

A Green Flag winning Forest Park. Opened in 2000 on the site of Watergate Colliery. With its wetlands, woodlands, wildflower meadows and recreational routes, including those for people with disabilities, this is one of Gateshead's premier countryside sites. Also includes woodlands at Washingwell and Bucks Hill.
 Off Whickham Highway at Lobley Hill, 01207 545212

Whickham Hermitage Community Garden

Lovely Community Garden, Hermitage Lane in Whickham, NE16 4JL, 07854 438187, www.whickhamhermitagegarden.co.uk

Whickham Thorns Outdoor Activity Centre (Gateshead Council)

The Centre offers a wide range of activities including archery, an exciting assault course, an indoor climbing wall, high ropes aerial assault course, orienteering trails, an artificial ski slope for skiing, snowboarding, sledging, tubing and lots more.
 Market Lane, Dunston NE11 9NX, 0191 433 5767
www.gateshead.gov.uk

Other Marking The Ways Artwork

Kibblesworth Millennium Village Centre

Kibblesworth Village Centre houses a number of artworks including Stained Glass by Sue Woolhouse, Coal Circle by David Arnold, Pit Pony by Gilbert Ward and William Pym's decorative bird fencing. You can visit the artworks at Kibblesworth Village Centre when the Centre is open by arrangement.

Grange Terrace, Kibblesworth, Gateshead, NE11 0XN
 0191 411 1193 www.kibblesworthvmc.co.uk

Artistic Waymarks - Children's activity

In 2002 a number of steel waymarks by Jim Bond were erected between Kibblesworth Millennium Centre and Watergate Forest Park along the Railway Paths. Metal blocks designed by local children were attached to the waymarks and these can be used to make 'rubbings' using crayons and paper.