



# ***EC Rider***

**Summer and Autumn 2022**



Photo by Nick Lambert

This is the 12<sup>th</sup> EC Rider and provides some ideas for days out using public transport and your Concessionary Travel Pass. A senior citizen railcard providing a 33% discount will enable travel further afield. We are fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the country with a wide variety of places at a short distance from home.

**Enjoy Exploring!**

## Important Advice Before You Travel

- Check times before you travel in particular, if there is an infrequent service. At the time of writing the information is up to date but operators can change times. There were some significant changes in late 2021 and early 2022 to reflect reduced ridership. Passengers are, however, starting to return and I am hopeful, but cannot guarantee, a stable network for the summer. A shortage of drivers does occasionally result in short term cancellations. Operators aim to publish this information on their websites.
- Check the opening times of any attractions you wish to visit and whether you may have to pre-book.
- Up to date travel information can be obtained by calling **Traveline on 0871 2002233**, visiting their website, bus operators' websites or timetable leaflets on operators' vehicles.

**Please do not be put off by this advice. It hasn't stopped Bill from travelling. Let's hope for a nice summer and go out and enjoy our lovely countryside**

We are very grateful to Bill Harbottle who spent time and trouble to



put together the information in this booklet.

Bill worked for many years in the travel industry and used his knowledge to help him with this piece of work for the Elders Council.

As you might imagine he also travels extensively with his bus pass and will be delighted to hear from any of you about your travels.

(Editor)

# Journey Suggestions

I hope the list below caters for a range of interests and mobility:

- Beautiful locations such as Richmond
- Interesting attractions such as Beamish Museum
- Interesting scenery such as a ride on AD122
- And, for those with a good level of fitness, some walks such as Haltwhistle to the Roman Wall.

This 2022 version has some new ideas for days out. Due to the constraints of space, in order to accommodate these, a number of last year's trips have been deleted. If you have kept this document, you will find that these trips are still possible. The cost of some of the more expensive visits are listed and, where known, the nearest toilet to the bus station or interchange point is shown in brackets. (M)=Market Place; (MH)=Market Hall; (MU) = Museum; (CG) = Cathedral Green; (RS) = Rail Station; (B) = Bus Station.

1. Most journeys from Newcastle are by Arriva or Go North East and start from Eldon Square Bus Station and times, where given, relate to Monday to Saturday, unless otherwise stated.
2. If a journey commences at the Haymarket Bus Station, this is specifically noted.

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**1** **DURHAM CITY** (CG) X12 and X21 leave regularly and take about 55 minutes. You can also take the slower 21. You should note that all buses depart and return from North Road as the bus station is closed for refurbishment.

In Durham it is a nice but long steep walk to the Market, Cathedral and Castle (phone 0191 334 2932 for times of tours).

There are lovely riverside walks. You may also like to visit the Botanical Gardens and Oriental Museum – catch Service 6. You could also catch the regular 56/57 to the first stop in Shincliffe alighting at the Rose Tree. Cross the road and it is a short walk to a lovely garden centre/café. It is also possible to walk along the river to Shincliffe from Durham, about 2 miles. There is a nice pocket guide to Durham on the web.

**2 DARLINGTON** (M – Dolphin Centre) Go to Durham and then take Service 7 every 20 minutes – total journey time from Newcastle is about 2 hours. Darlington has good shops, an indoor market and on Mondays a small outdoor one. Alight the number 7 at Morrison's on the journey into town to visit the interesting railway museum.

**3 RICHMOND** (MH) Buses X26/X27 leave Darlington every 30 minutes. For a scenic ride take Service 29 at 1.10 pm, returns 4.30 pm. Richmond is a very attractive town with a castle (English Heritage), some narrow streets, a number of museums, a square worth exploring and riverside walks with a waterfall. Market Day is Saturday. Cross the river to the old railway station where there is a café, retail outlets, a small cinema and a small historical display. There is a nice walk along the old railway to the ruins of Easby Abbey and the old parish church with some wonderful 12<sup>th</sup> Century wall paintings which takes about 30 minutes.

**4 HARTLEPOOL** (MU) Take the X10 at 10 minutes past the hour and change at Peterlee to frequent buses – total journey time 1 hour and 30 minutes. Returns Peterlee at 02 minutes past the hour.

The National Museum of the Royal Navy, near the Marina, has a dramatic reconstruction of naval life in Nelson's time, also 'HMS Trincomalee', England's oldest floating warship (£8.00 for 1 visit). Nearby is the town museum – free. Take the Service 7 (other side of the road to the Marina) to the Headland (old Hartlepool) – nice coastal walks, old battery and St Hilda's, a Grade 1 listed building.

**5 PENSHAW MONUMENT** This folly, built on a hill above the village of the same name, looks like a mini-Acropolis. It commemorates John Lambton, who was Governor General of British North America (1792-1840) and was built between 1844-45. Located adjacent to one of the roads between Washington and Sunderland, it is visible for miles and, although steep, it is only a short walk from a nearby bus stop.

On the opposite side of the road is Herrington Country Park created on the site of a former colliery where there are some lovely walks on the flat, a lake, café and farm shop.

Catch the Go North East X1 which runs every 12 minutes from Eldon Square to Washington Galleries and transfer to the 2/2A which runs every 15 minutes. Total journey time between 45 minutes to an hour.

**6 STOCKTON** Get the X10 at 10 minutes past the hour. It takes an hour and 30 minutes and passes Dalton Park, a big shopping centre and returns most of the day at 22 minutes past the hour.

There are street markets on Wednesday and Saturday. A visit to Preston Park is worthwhile for its outstanding museum with a parade of Victorian shops and nostalgic 20<sup>th</sup> Century theme. Also in Preston Park is Butterfly World with a lovely collection of live butterflies. Just catch the frequent Service 7 going towards Yarm, which is also worth a visit and is only about 20 minutes from Stockton. It is a small, historic market town on the banks of the Tees – you will love the iconic small market hall, make sure you read the plaques on the wall.

**7 MIDDLESBROUGH, (B) REDCAR AND SALTBURN** The X10 leaves every hour and takes 105 minutes to Middlesbrough. A short walk will take you to the Tees Transporter Bridge, build in 1911. It is the longest working transporter bridge in the world (although temporarily not working). Middlesbrough is also the starting point for the X3/X4 buses which operate regularly to Redcar and Saltburn. At Redcar you can visit the Vertical Pier and the Zetland Lifeboat Museum. Saltburn is a lovely place with its Cliff Tramway (temporarily closed), Pier, Beach and views of the cliffs and North York Moors. It is possible to walk back to Redcar along the beach – about 90 minutes.

**8 GREAT AYTON (M)** Take the 28A at 30 minutes past the hour from Middlesbrough bus station. Returns at 56 minutes. Takes about 45 minutes. This pretty little village lies on the banks of the river Leven on the edge of the North York Moors. It was the boyhood home of Captain James Cook and you can visit the school where he received his education, which is now a museum. There is a lovely village green, shops and café. A short walk out of the village and you will be able to see the distinctive hill of Roseberry Topping. A short distance on the 28A will take you to Stokesley, also worth a visit.

**9** **WHITBY** (Opposite RS) and **SCARBOROUGH** (RS) There are two routes from Middlesbrough to Whitby. X93 across the moors takes just over an hour and leaves at 20 minutes past each hour while the X4 via Redcar, Saltburn and the scenic coastal route takes nearly two hours leaving at 5 and 35 minutes past the hour – try this one way – possibly stopping at Staithes – a lovely coastal village but a steep walk downhill.



Whitby is well worth a visit, both for the harbour area and the Abbey (English Heritage) on the East Cliff, reached by 199 steps. The X93 continues to Scarborough from Whitby taking about an hour and passing through Robin Hoods Bay which is well worth a visit but a very steep walk downhill from the bus stop. It is possible to walk here from Whitby along the old railway line to Scarborough – 6 miles and wonderful scenery. Scarborough has numerous attractions but it is an hour from Whitby and the buses can be very busy in mid-summer. If you go, and it is a lovely trip, I would recommend spring or autumn.

**10** **BISHOP AUCKLAND** (B) **SHILDON** (MU) and **STANHOPE** (MU) The X21 runs every half hour to Bishop Auckland and takes 90 minutes. The Mining Art Gallery, Castle and grounds are worth a visit. From Bishop take bus 1 or 5 (30 minutes) going to Darlington which stops outside Locomotion in Shildon, which is part of the National Railway Museum and well worth a visit. From Bishop you could also go to Stanhope (Weardale Motor Services – 45 minutes). A very attractive, small town in Upper Weardale – there are lovely river walks, church and the Dales Centre has a good selection of guides and information about the area. The Express bus which used to run on a Saturday to Stanhope no longer operates, but could be reinstated. Check Weardale Motor Services website. You can go further to explore Upper Weardale – get the 102 (from Stanhope) at 1.00 pm to Rookhope, back at 1.30 pm or the longer 101 up to Cowhill at 1.45 pm, back at 2.45 pm. You only have time for the bus journey. On your return from Stanhope, you could alight the 101 at Crook from where there are regular buses to Durham.

**11 BARNARD CASTLE, STAINDROP and RABY CASTLE (MU)** A really interesting place to visit with a castle high above the river and the wonderful Bowes Museum. It is a nice walk to the ruins of Egglestone Abbey. You can travel here from either Darlington (X75/X76) from outside the Town Hall at 13 and 43 minutes past the hour or Service 85 from Bishop Auckland Bus Station. This runs less frequently at 11.05 am or 1.05 pm returning at 5.00 pm. This service stops at the gates of Raby Castle. Built in the thirteenth century, this well-preserved castle, set among 200 acres of deer park, is privately owned. Castle opening is Wednesday to Sunday. A visit to the Castle and Park costs £10.50. From the Castle, it is a short walk to the lovely village of Staindrop – church, cafes and village green. Buses return to Bishop Auckland at 5.10 pm, a couple of minutes later from the Castle. The X76 also services Staindrop returning to Darlington at least hourly. Journey times to Barnard Castle vary but are approximately an hour.

**12 BEAMISH MUSEUM (M) and TANFIELD RAILWAY (M)** Bus 28 leaves 59 minutes past each hour returning at 28 minutes past and takes less than an hour. On Sundays departs 20 minutes past and returns 19 minutes past each hour. Beamish is open every day in the summer but does close on certain days in the winter. It is described as the Living Museum of the North and has old trams, school, churches, housing, shops, pithead and old country manor. There are regular themed events during the year such as a Wartime Weekend. The admission price is £14.50 BUT this is an annual



pass. For a short trip, on a Sunday, you may like another historical experience visiting Tanfield Railway. This runs on a former colliery railway and offers a run of three miles usually behind an industrial steam engine and runs between Sunnyside and Tanfield. The main station is at St Andrews House where there is an engine shed, historical information and refreshments. You can alight at Causey Arch, built between 1725 and 1727, which is the oldest surviving railway bridge in the world and built to carry horse drawn coal wagons. The X30 leaves Newcastle going to Stanley at 15 minutes past the hour and takes about 30 minutes to St Andrews House and returns at 50 minutes past the hour. With both of these attractions, check before you travel as to whether you need to pre-book.

**13 CONSETT** (B) to **LANCHESTER** I would recommend a ride on the X70/71 from Eldon Square to Consett. This service is usually operated by double deckers and climbs high up into County Durham offering lovely views even as far as the Cheviots. Once in Consett you would also enjoy the bus ride to Durham through Lanchester (X5/X15) which takes 45 minutes and runs every 30 minutes. Lanchester is a lovely village with a nice old church, village green and shops where you could break your journey.

For those of you able to try this walk. Consett to Lanchester is one of my favourite walks. I would recommend starting a mile from Consett by taking the 78 Castleside bus to the Grove, alighting where the bus turns off the main road. Walk back over this road and you will see the start of the walk. It is an easy 5 miles. Soon after starting you will pass under an impressive railway arch and you are at Lydgetts Junction – completely different to a 100 years ago when busy lines diverged to Newcastle, Stanhope or Durham. There are lovely views of the North Durham countryside as you walk down the valley. There is a nice farm shop and café at Knitsley which is closed on Mondays, past Hurbeck Farm and at Lanchester you will see in situ the old platform and station buildings.

**14 HEXHAM** (B) There are a number of routes to Hexham from Eldon Square, all providing scenic journeys. The 684 and 685 go to the north of the Tyne and are the quickest taking less than an hour. The 684 goes through Wylam where George Stephenson was born. The 10 travels along the south bank through Prudhoe (castle) and close to Cherryburn. Get off at Mickley where Bewick, the engraver lived. The 74 runs less frequently at 11.35 am and 2.35 pm from Newcastle, returning at 4.05 pm and passes through Stamfordham and Matfen. All services except the 74 run through Corbridge which is also worth a visit for its church and Roman museum. In Hexham visit the Abbey with its excellent free museum and surrounding parkland or the Old Gaol and walks along the river towards Warden (about 3 miles) where there is a lovely old church, part of which is Anglo Saxon.

**15 BELLINGHAM** (MU) Service 680 leaves Hexham at 11.25 am or 1.25 pm for a journey of less than an hour up the pleasant North Tyne Valley – return buses are at 2.15, 4.35 and 6.35 pm. Bellingham is a quiet country town with places for lunch and a really



good Heritage Centre at the old Railway Station where the 680 terminates. There are also nice walks.

**16 ALLENDALE and ALLENHEADS** are 25 and 45 minutes south of Hexham. Bus 688 leaves Hexham for Allendale and Allenheads at 9.15 am, 11.15 am, 1.15 pm and 3.35 pm. This is a lovely run across the moors, sometimes run by double deckers. There are shops and cafés in Allendale and a nice heritage centre/café at Allenheads. Return from Allenheads at 12.01, 2.01, 4.21, 6.21 and 7.21 pm. 15 minutes later from Allendale.

**17 ALSTON** There are a number of alternative routes to Alston. Take the 10.45 am service 685 (Carlisle bus) to Haltwhistle arriving 12.16 pm then at 12.40 pm get the 681 up the South Tyne valley, reaching Alston Townhead at 1.28 pm. A super alternative is Wrights 889 from Hexham on Tuesday at 2.10 pm. This market day service arrives at 3.30 pm. The ride from Hexham to Alston goes up the lovely West Allen Valley then A689. Black Hill on the Northumberland/Cumbria boundary at 605 metres above sea level is the highest point in England for any all-year bus service. Return at 5.06 pm from Henderson's Garage on Go North East 681/X81 which gets to Hexham at 6.05 pm.

Wright Brothers will be running their service 888 from Newcastle Coach Station to Alston and Keswick this summer commencing the 3rd July. Departs 9.20 am Mondays to Saturdays and 10.05 am on Sundays ,returns 4.30pm Keswick and 6.05pm from Alston . Check times before travelling. This is a super journey. There is also a lovely narrow-gauge railway which runs to Slaggyford and takes 95 minutes. Departures at 1.00 and 3.00 pm.

**18 HADRIAN'S WALL (MU)** AD 122 runs to Haltwhistle from Hexham at 9.10 am and hourly until 5.10 pm until 30<sup>th</sup> October. It calls at several Roman sites: Chesters (English Heritage £6.30),



Housesteads (English Heritage and National Trust £7.00), Vindolanda (£7.50) and Walltown for the Roman Army Museum (£6.50). Pick up a timetable and tourist information on the bus.

A new visitor centre opened in 2017 at Once Brewed called The Sill which has some lovely exhibits about the landscape, history, culture and heritage of Northumberland. It is free and well worth a visit. There are cafés and retail outlets here as well.

**19 CARLISLE** Service 685 takes 2 hours 20 minutes departing from Newcastle at 45 minutes past each hour and returns at 15 minutes past the hour.

Carlisle, an attractive, small city, has a red sandstone Cathedral and an intact Castle (English Heritage). There is also Tullie House Museum (£12), which is highly recommended, a good shopping centre and some nice parks. There is also another favourite, the 93/93A circular trip from Carlisle at 12.40 pm, arriving back at 2.26 pm. (Do not alight mid route as buses are infrequent.) It runs across the Solway marshes to Bowness, then back via Cardurnock, Anthorn and Kirkbride. It is also possible to use your pass to visit Gretna from Carlisle.

**20 PENRITH** (B) Service 104 leaves Carlisle at 45 minutes past the hour taking 40 minutes. Buses return from Penrith at 25 minutes past the hour. The 888 also serves Penrith— see Alston.

Penrith is a pleasant town with a ruined castle and a small, free museum. There is a lovely bus journey, the 508, which runs down the side of Ullswater past Pooley Bridge, Glenridding and Patterdale (about 50 minutes). This is best done on a summer Saturday when you can get an early start on the 685 from Newcastle. The 508 runs from Penrith at 11.32 am, 1.32 and 3.32 pm returning at 2.20 and 4.20 pm (hourly Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and School Holidays).

Some buses continue over Kirkstone Pass to Windemere. However, this takes two hours and you would spend most of the day travelling.

**21 KESWICK** (Booth's) Keswick is a beautiful town with plenty to keep you occupied – lakeside walks, boat trips on the lake, museums. When you arrive go inside Booths Supermarket where you will find plenty of tourist information and bus timetables. There are a number of spectacular bus routes from Keswick. The 78 open top service up Borrowdale to Seatoller and back takes about an hour; the 77 and 77A circular routes to Buttermere climbing



Honister and Whinlatter passes and the 555 down to Grasmere. The service 685 to Carlisle operates hourly (2 hours and 20 minutes) than the 104 to Penrith hourly (40 minutes) followed by the X5 to Keswick every hour taking 50 minutes. There is a 554 to Wigton with a connection to Carlisle at 5.30 pm arriving 7.00 pm. It is a long way albeit a very scenic travel by bus.

In the middle of the summer there is a direct service to Keswick run by Wright Brothers – see Alston.

I like to go to Keswick for the day but always use the train to Carlisle or Penrith to increase the amount of travel to enjoy there on arrival.

**22 ALNWICK** (M) X15 from Haymarket at 38 minutes past each hour takes 1 hour 22 minutes. For a scenic ride take the X18 at 8 minutes past each hour via Amble, Warkworth (for an English Heritage castle and a nice walk along the River Coquet to the Hermitage) also Alnmouth for pleasant seaside walks. The X20 at 38 minutes past also goes to Alnwick via Ashington, Amble and Warkworth.

Alnwick is an interesting town to walk around. Visit the Castle and the famous Gardens. (Prices vary and you may have to book in advance.)

Barter Books in the old station has a huge collection of 2<sup>nd</sup> hand books. From Alnwick take buses 418 or X18 at 10.07, 11.05 am 12.05, 1.10 and 2.05 pm to the coastal towns of Craster (harbour and kippers and a nice walk along the cliffs to Dunstanburgh Castle), Seahouses and Bamburgh (Castle and Grace Darling Museum). Check return times from wherever you travel to. For next spring, I would recommend you go to Warkworth to see the daffodils around the castle and the beautiful cherry blossom in Alnwick.

**23 ROTHBURY** (Bridge Street) The X14 takes 1 hour 13 minutes at 10.23, 11.23 am, 12.23 and 1.23 pm from Haymarket. Buses return from Rothbury to Newcastle at 2.00, 3.00 and 5.10 pm. Rothbury is a pleasant small town with a large green, church and several tea shops. Craggside is close by, the former home of Lord Armstrong, but is a long uphill walk, through woods.

DO NOT WALK ON THE DANGEROUS ROAD.

**24 WOOLER** is a nice small town. It is reached from Alnwick in 45 minutes by two scenic services 470 via Chillingham and 473 via Powburn.

Departures from Alnwick are 9.00 am, 12.30 pm and 3.50 pm (470) and 9.00, 10.30 am and 1.00 and 3.50 pm (473). Departures from Wooler are 10.00 am and 1.15 pm (470); 11.33 am, 1.48 pm and 5.05 pm (473).

**25 MORPETH** Direct buses on services X14, X15 and X18 leave Haymarket taking 33 minutes. In Morpeth visit the free Bagpipe Museum, walk in the park and along the riverside. It is possible to walk to Mitford along the side of a quiet road where there is a lovely church and ruined castle (about 3 miles).

**26 NORTH TYNESIDE RAILWAY AND STEPHENSON RAILWAY MUSEUM** is located in Middle Engine Lane in North Tyneside and are reached in 26 minutes from Haymarket Bus Station on Go North East Service 310. This operates every 20 minutes (half hourly on Sundays).

There is a wonderful collection of locomotives inside including Billy, an industrial steam locomotive believed to be the third oldest in the world which hauled coal wagons from Killingworth Colliery to the Tyne. Also in the collections is a very old electric locomotive built in Berlin in 1909 which worked coal trains at South Shields for 70 years. An electric motor luggage van (1904) from the first day of North Tyneside's electric railway is a forerunner of the current Metro. The museum has a café and there are also heritage train rides over a short section of track to Percy Main. For opening times and train running dates go to the [www.stephensonsteamrailway.org.uk](http://www.stephensonsteamrailway.org.uk) . Open weekends and other selected dates.

**27 WASHINGTON OLD HALL** This picturesque stone manor house with its gardens and nuttery lies in a tranquil setting at the heart of the historic village. The building incorporates parts of the original medieval home of George Washington's direct ancestors and it is here that the family took their surname of Washington. There is a café and toilet at the hall (check opening times).

Catch the X1 from Eldon Square and alight at Washington Galleries Bus Station changing onto the 82 bus destination Waterview Park. Total journey time less than an hour.



Whilst in the area, you may also like to visit the Washington Wetland Centre – a haven for wildlife set on the banks of the River Wear. It is home to a range of rare wildfowl, exotic birds and otters and is open all the year round. Admittance is circa £8.

From Washington Galleries, catch the 37 operated by Gateshead Central Taxis (direction Usworth) or Go North East service 8 (direction Sunderland). Journey time about 10 minutes.

**28 SEAHAM HARBOUR (M)** The most convenient way to travel to Seaham is from Sunderland Park Lane Interchange where there are regular buses (60/X6 and 62) taking 20-30 minutes. Use either Go North East 56 (takes an hour and 15 minutes from Market Street) or the Metro to Sunderland Park Lane.

Seaham has some nice seafront walks, look out for Tommy, a steel statue by a local artist commemorating WW1 and the impressive Londonderry Offices. A walk down to the harbour brings you to the East Durham Heritage and Lifeboat Centre normally open Thursday to Sunday between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm where there are photographs and other artefacts from Old Seaham and the restored George Elmy Lifeboat which capsized with the loss of many lives in 1962. Elsewhere towards Sunderland is St Mary the Virgin Church, part of which is Anglo Saxon. Check times.

**29 NEWBIGGIN-by-the-SEA** The X21 leaves from the Haymarket and operates every 20 minutes, the journey takes just over an hour. Newbiggin is a lovely seaside resort with some pleasant walks. Look out for the statues facing the sea. There is a nice information centre with a small museum and café and plenty of other places to eat.

## Some Local Walks

**30 WYLAM TO NEWBURN** Catch the 684 service (destination Hexham) from Eldon Square Bus Station to Wylam. This departs hourly at 15 minutes past and returns at 31 minutes past the hour and takes 33 minutes. It is 3 miles to walk to Newburn mainly along the path of the old railway/wagonway on the north bank of the Tyne. Before setting off downstream, you may like to walk a short distance in the other direction towards Hexham along the



Photo by Mary Nicholls

track of the old railway that used to run on the North Bank of the Tyne to see and walk over the impressive cantilever bridge at Haggs Bank (about half a mile). You will pass George Stephenson Cottage and the site of the Battle of Newburn where

the Scots defeated the English in 1640. There are some excellent information boards. From Newburn the 22 runs every 10 minutes to Newcastle. Wylam was a significant place in the early development of the railways which is documented in small museum (check opening times).

**31 WHITLEY BAY TO SEATON SLUICE** Take the regular Arriva 308 or Go North East 309 to Whitley Bay alighting at the Spanish City. There are some nice cafes here. You can then walk either on the beach, promenade or cliff top all the way to St Mary's Island – the causeway can be crossed at low tide. If you are able, you could continue walking north to Seaton Sluice which has a nice harbour and a reputation for good fish and chips. Each leg of the walk will take no more than an hour.

There are some nice beach walks north of Seaton Sluice and from here you can catch the 308/309 back to Newcastle or the Arriva X7 (half hourly) which goes past Seaton Delaval Hall – a National Trust property with nice gardens but limited opening times (check before you travel).

**32 HALTWHISTLE AND A WALK TO THE ROMAN WALL** Haltwhistle is a small market town on the Tyne surrounded by beautiful countryside with some lovely stone buildings, a nice church, shops and places to eat. It is also at the heart of Britain. If you are moderately fit, there is a nice walk you can take up to the

Roman Wall at Cawfields. Three miles each way and well signposted. Follow directions to the Haltwhistle Burn for a gentle walk next to the stream with wonderful rock formations and signs of past industry. After walking through an open field to reach the military road a short walk along the grass path to the right and after a short distance you join the road to the Roman Wall. The 685 to Carlisle takes one and a half hours and there are for most of the day two trains an hour taking one hour to Haltwhistle.

## Sometimes take the train

**Again, as previously, I have included a number of trips which involve travel by train before commencing a bus journey.**

These can be expensive but you save 33% with a Senior Railcard (costs £30 for a year). For this year the trips suggested are based on onward travel from Berwick.

**33 BERWICK** A few miles south of the Border this is a lovely town. It can be reached by bus from the Haymarket. The X15 leave Haymarket Bus Station at 10.38 am and 12.38 pm (journey times 2 hours and 22 minutes).

The X18 via the coast also has journeys at 10.08 am (journey time 3 hours and 52 minutes). The train, on average, only takes 45 minutes and there is at least one an hour.



There are lovely walks along the river Tweed underneath the Royal Border Rail Bridge in one direction and in other the old C17 bridge (leading to Spittal where there are some lovely seaside walks) towards the pier. There are the Elizabethan town walls, barracks and old Town Hall.

Here are some bus journeys you can make from Berwick, some just across the border where the English Concessionary Pass is valid:

**KELSO** (pass valid) Market town on the Tweed with some lovely old buildings, a ruined abbey and just a short walk to Floors Castle. The 67 Borders Bus is a lovely trip – you pass Norham Castle and Coldstream. Departures from Berwick Station forecourt at 12.05, 2.05 pm. Return from Horsemarket Street Kelso at 1.15pm (1.20

pm Friday schooldays), 3.15pm (3.40pm Monday-Thursday schooldays) 5.15pm, 6.15 pm. Journey time an hour.

**EYEMOUTH** (pass valid) Just 20 minutes north of Berwick in Scotland, there is a lovely harbour with plenty of fishing boats and you may see seals. Across the harbour is Gunsgreen House which used to be a smugglers' haven and is well worth a visit. There are frequent buses but they do not run to a regular timetable with some going from the Station forecourt (10.10 am, 12.10 pm and 2.40 pm) or the main road (10.30 am, 11.45 am, 12.30 pm 1.10 pm). Regular return departures from outside the Co-op on the High Street, Eyemouth.

**ST. ABBS** (pass not valid) A small fishing village with a picturesque harbour and nice cafes just over 30 minutes from Berwick. For those with moderate fitness it is possible to walk around the cliffs (about 3 miles – information point near bus stop). Monday to Friday departures from main road, Berwick, at 9.45, 11.45 am, 1.10 and 2.30 pm. From St Abbs 12.25 am, 1.50 pm, 3.40 pm, 6.10 pm. Sundays Berwick 10.45 am, 12.15 pm, 3.15 pm; St Abbs 12.25 pm, 3.55 pm 5.25 pm.

**HOLY ISLAND** Mentioned in previous guides, this unique 477 service (Border Buses) where the timetable varies with the tides runs on certain days of the week taking just over 30 minutes.



**BAMBURGH/SEAHOUSES** can be accessed on the X18 from Newcastle but be aware that the journey can take up to 3 hours. As a suggestion the X18 from Berwick Station at 10.05 am or 12.05 pm arrives at Seahouses in an hour and you can return at 5.16 pm.

**ETAL/FORD** Two small villages in North Northumberland. Etal has a castle, thatched pub, light railway and river walks. Ford also has a castle a beautiful village hall with beautiful paintings covering the whole of the main room. Journey times are less than 30 minutes on the 267 Border Buses from Golden Square at 11.20 am, 1.35 pm returning from Ford at 2.55 pm, 5.13 pm (5 minutes later from Etal)

**Bill Harbottle**

**Happy Travelling!**