



EC Rider

Summer and Autumn 2021



A walk along the river Wansbeck at Morpeth

This is the 11th edition and gives you wonderful scope to enjoy interesting towns and our beautiful countryside. After such a long lockdown many of you will be keen to get out and about, some not going too far but others wanting to travel further afield.



Warkworth Castle



Rambling at Rothbury

Here's the perfect guide to help you do that. Here's how to get to Berwick, Penrith, Whitby and Scarborough and a host more places. A senior rail card can take you even further. We hope you enjoy every minute of your journeys wherever you travel.

The Elders Council of Newcastle

Transport Working Group

For ten years we have prepared a leaflet giving some ideas for days out using a concessionary bus pass. A new EC Rider was in preparation last year then the first lockdown happened and so the draft copy was shelved. We started this year in another lockdown and it seemed we wouldn't be able to offer a new edition, however, the last few weeks have seen some easing of restrictions so a new edition, the 11th went into preparation and this is the result.

We are grateful to Bill Harbottle who has kindly agreed to help us again this year. Also, grateful thanks to Nick Lambert for the cover pics.

*Yet again, we emphasise that you must check prices, attractions and the details of your journeys **before you travel.***

It is most important that you check the Government advice re Covid travel restrictions, especially re masks and spacing.



You can check and get timetable leaflets at the Nexus Travel Centres in Newcastle, by calling the bus operators direct, by calling TRAVELINE on 0871 2002233 or visiting the bus operators' websites.

Most journeys from Newcastle are by Arriva or Go North East and start from Eldon Square bus station and times relate to Monday to Saturday unless otherwise stated.

We are grateful to Bill for all his hard work and we hope that you find this leaflet useful and that you have many happy days out.

Bill Ions Co-ordinator- Transport Working Group

Outings in 2021 with a Concessionary Bus Pass

The 2021 EC Rider has some new suggestions for days out using public transport. Despite increasing the size by four pages we have still had to delete a number of trips included in the 2019 version. If you have kept this document, you will however find that the majority of these are still possible. As previously, there are two trips that are outside the area where you will need to catch a train before heading off to Wensleydale or Helmsley.

I must stress the importance of checking times before you travel. Times, where given, are also not for Sundays although many places such as Durham still have a good bus service on this day but many places in rural areas such as Wooler will not be accessible. Also, if you are visiting some of the attractions, check times of opening, particularly after the summer and check prices. Where known, I have included the cost of some of the more expensive visits. Also, where possible the nearest toilet to the bus station or interchange point is shown in brackets after the place name sometimes using the codes (B) = Bus Station, (M) = Market Place, (MH) = Market Hall, (W) = Wetherspoons (also good for tea, coffee or a meal), (MU) = Museum, (CG) = Cathedral Green, (RS) Rail Station. Most locations should have a disabled toilet facility and there will be facilities in cafes in any town you visit. I hope you enjoy your trips out.

Bill Harbottle

1 DURHAM CITY. (W) (CG) X12 and X21 leave every 15 minutes 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 3342932 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/cafe. 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 then service 7 every 15 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 20 minutes taking 33 minutes. For a scenic ride take Service 29 at 1.15pm, returns 4.25pm.

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 12th Century wall paintings which takes about 30 minutes.

4 HARTLEPOOL. (MU) Take the X9 from Newgate Street at 32 Minutes past the hour and change at Peterlee to frequent buses – total journey time 1 hour 20 minutes. Returns Peterlee at 25 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 USHAW COLLEGE. A religious establishment in a lovely rural setting 4 miles west of Durham. The majority of the college was built in the late 19th century and contains significant examples of the works of Pugin and later revival architects in gothic revival style. There is a beautiful refectory, hall and library and the chapel is stunning, all surrounded by nice gardens. Check opening times.

It is reached by service 52 from Durham Milburngate Stand J at 11.00 am and 1.30pm arriving in 20 minutes at Bearpark Ushaw College Road

end from where it is a short walk to the college. Buses return at 1.08 and 3.34pm.

6 STOCKTON Get the X10 from Newgate Street at 2 minutes past the hour. It takes just over an hour and passes Dalton Park a new big shopping centre.

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 20th 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 X9 and X10 leave Newgate Street every half hour and take 85 minutes to Middlesbrough. A short walk will take you to the Tees Transporter Bridge, built 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 every 15 minutes 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, Pier, Beach and views of the cliffs and North York Moors. It is possible to walk back to Redcar along the beach - about 90 Mins.

8 GREAT AYTON. (M) Take the 28A at 30 minutes past the hour from Middlesbrough Bus Station. Returns at 58 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 2 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 midsummer. If you go, and it is a lovely trip, I would recommend spring or autumn.

You may also be interested to know that Go North East has introduced a seasonal X11 to Whitby and Scarborough.

This departs from the Laing Art Gallery at 8.40am arriving at Whitby 11.05 (return 6.25pm) and Scarborough 11.45 (return 5.45pm).

It operates daily to the 3rd September and weekends to the 31st October. It is not free but concessions are available at £6 to Whitby and £7 to Scarborough.

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. On Saturdays you can catch a direct bus to Stanhope from Newcastle at 10.00am from Newgate Street (outside Wilkinsons) returning at 4.00pm. You can go further to explore upper Weardale - get the 102 (from Stanhope) at 1.00pm to Rookhope, back at 1.30pm or the longer 101 up to Cowshill at 1.45pm, back at 2.45pm. You only have time for the bus journey.

11 BARNARD CASTLE, STAINDROP and RABY CASTLE. 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 11.02am or 13.02pm returning at 4.56pm. 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. Gardens and park open daily £8. Castle opening is Wed to Sun.

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 5.10pm, a couple of minutes later from the castle. The X76 also serves 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). Buses 28 and 28a leave 13 and 50 minutes past each hour from Eldon Square and takes less than an hour.

Saturdays Sundays and Bank Holidays a B1 express runs from the Central Station at 9.10,10.30 and 11.50am returning at 2pm, 3.20pm and 4.40pm.

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, houses, 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 the 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 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 Andrews House and returns at 5 minutes past the hour. Before you make this trip check

the website as, due to the pandemic, initially only pre booked group travel may be available.

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 16 Castleside bus to the Grove alighting where the bus turns right 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 X85 and 685 go to the north of the Tyne and are the quickest taking less than an hour. The X84 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 11.35am and 2.35pm from Newcastle returning at 4.05pm 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. You can return to Hexham/Newcastle

on the hourly X85 at 20 minutes past the hour from the Boatside Inn.

15 BELLINGHAM.(MU) Service 680 leaves Hexham at 11.10am or 1.10pm for a journey of less than an hour up the pleasant North Tyne Valley - return buses are at 2.00, 4.35, 6.10 and 7.05pm.

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 at 10.45am and 12.00, 1.50 and 3.45pm all except the first continuing to Allenheads. This is a lovely run across the moors sometimes run by double deckers. There are shops and cafes in Allendale and a nice heritage centre /cafe at Allenheads.

Return from Allenheads at 12.46, 2.36, 4.36 and 7.26pm (15 minutes later at Allendale with an additional bus at 6pm (Allendale) Mondays to Fridays).

17 ALSTON. There are a number of alternative routes to Alston. Take the 10.45am service 85 (Newcastle to Carlisle bus) to Haltwhistle arriving 12.16pm then at 12.40pm get the 681 up the South Tyne valley, reaching Alston Townhead at 1.28pm. A super alternative is Wrights 889 from Hexham on Tuesday at 3.07pm. This market day service arrives at 3.30pm. 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 5.06pm from Hendersons Garage on Go North East 681/X81 which gets to Hexham at 6.05pm.

It is not known yet whether the 888 from Newcastle to Alston/Keswick will run this year.

There is also a lovely narrow-gauge railway the times of which are not yet known.

18 HADRIAN'S WALL. (MU) AD 122 runs to Haltwhistle from Hexham at 9.10am and hourly, until 5.10pm until 31st October. It calls at several Roman sites: Chesters (English Heritage -£6.30), Housesteads (English Heritage and National Trust -£7), 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 cafes and retail outlets here as well.

19 CARLISLE. Service 85/685 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 are two museums, a good shopping centre and some nice parks. There is also another favourite, the 93/93A circular trip from Carlisle at 12.40pm, arriving back at 2.26pm. (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 15 and 45 minutes past the hour taking 40 minutes. Buses return from Penrith also at 15 and 45 minutes.

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, Glennridding 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 11.32am, 1.32 and 3.32pm returning at 2.25 and 4.25pm. (hourly Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and School Holidays).

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. 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 20 minutes), then the 104 to Penrith half hourly (45 minutes) followed by the X5 to Keswick every hour taking 50 minutes. There is a direct 554 back to Carlisle at 5.30pm arriving 6.46pm. It is long way albeit a very scenic travel by bus.

In the middle of the summer there may be a direct 888 Newcastle to Keswick service via 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 or X20 at 38 minutes past, both taking about 1 hour 55 minutes. via Amble; Warkworth (for an English Heritage castle and a nice walk along the River Coquet to the Hermitage) also Alnmouth (X18) for pleasant seaside walks.

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 2nd hand books. From Alnwick take buses 418 or X18 at 10.05am, 12.05am and 2.05pm 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). For next spring I would recommend you go to Warkworth to see the daffodils around the castle and the beautiful cherry blossom in Alnwick Gardens.

23 BERWICK. (W and RS) The direct bus is X15 leaving Haymarket at 38 minutes past the even hour (8.38am, 10.38am etc) taking 2 hours 20 minutes – alight at “Golden Square”, the first stop across the Bridge. The X18 at 10.08am runs by the long very attractive coastal route via Amble, Alnwick and Seahouses arriving at 1.57pm. Return on X15 at 3.07, 5.17pm or X18 at 2.11, 4.21 and 6.21pm. (Summer timetable) Try the X18 in one direction with, perhaps, a break in Alnwick.

Berwick, England’s most northerly town, is an attractive Georgian Market Town, you can walk the walls and along the river to see the magnificent bridges. It is quite a sight to see a train go over the Royal Border Bridge. Onward from Berwick your pass is valid for short journeys into Scotland and return BUT you cannot break your journey in Scotland. Eyemouth is a valid destination to which buses run at least

hourly but you cannot travel further on this route up to St Abbs/Edinburgh. There is lovely harbour - you may see a seal, fishing boats and Gunsgreen House.

24 ROTHBURY. (Bridge Street) The X14 takes 1 hour 13 minutes at 10.23, 11.23am, 12.23 and 1.23pm (Haymarket). Buses return from Rothbury to Newcastle at 2.00, 3.00 and 5.10 pm. There is a later departure at 6.10pm changing at Morpeth. Rothbury is a pleasant small town with a large green, church and several tea shops. Cragside is close by, the former home of Lord Armstrong, but is a long uphill walk, through woods - DO NOT WALK ON THE DANGEROUS ROAD

25 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 09.00am, 1230 and 3.50pm (470) and 09.00, 1030am, 1.00 and 3.50pm (473). Departures from Wooler 10.00am, 1.15pm (470) – 11.33am, 1.48 and 5.05pm (473).

26 MORPETH Direct buses on services X14, X15, X16 and X18 leave Haymarket every 15 minutes 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.

27. North Tyneside Railway and Stephenson Railway Museum. Are 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 half hourly. Currently open Sundays only with pre booking essential. (stephensonsteamrailway.org.uk)

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 collection 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 days 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.

28. WASHINGTON OLD HALL. This picturesque stone manor house with its gardens and nuttery lies in a tranquil setting at the heart of 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 cafe and toilets at the hall - +check opening times.

Catch the X1 from Eldon Square going to Easington Lane and alight at Washington Galleries Bus Station changing onto the 84 bus destination Heworth. The X1 runs every 12 minutes and takes 32 minutes. The 84 departs the Galleries at 00 and 30 minutes and takes 10 minutes to arrive at Washington Village returning at 08 and 38. 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 at 57 minutes past the hour (direction Usworth) or Go North East service 8 at 07 and 37 minutes past the hour (direction Sunderland) and alight at Waterview Park - journey time about 10 minutes. The 37 bus returns at 54 minutes past the hour (direction Doxford Park) or the 8 at 12 and 42 minutes past the hour (direction Stanley).

29. 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 X7) taking 20-30 minutes. Use either Go North East 56 (takes an hour 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 (currently closed for Corvid) but normally open Thursday to Sunday between 10.00am and 3.00pm 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.

Three local trips with short walks.

30 A walk along the banks of the Tyne Catch either Go North East Service 12/12A from Eldon Square or Stagecoach 22 from Market Street (direction Throckley) and alight at the last stop in Newcastle Business Park- journey takes about 10 minutes. Follow the path down to the river and enjoy a 3 mile walk back to Newcastle. Years ago, this was a thriving industrial area and there are a number of information boards explaining the history of the area. Now it is all peace and quiet and you are likely to see wading birds. Admire the impressive disused coal staithes at Dunston.

You pass seven iconic bridges. First is the 1983 Redheugh Road Bridge followed by the 1906 King Edward Rail Bridge which carries the East Coast Mainline over the Tyne, The Metro Bridge is number 3 followed by my favourite the High Level opened by Queen Victoria in 1849 and designed by Robert Stephenson, rail traffic on top and pedestrians and buses below. We now arrive at the Swing Bridge (1875) designed by Lord Armstrong, rarely swings now but rotated 6000 times in 1924. The penultimate crossing is the Tyne Bridge. Symbol of Tyneside opened by George 5th in 1928. The walk ends at the Gateshead Millenium Bridge with stunning views opposite to the Sage and Baltic Buildings. The regular Q3 bus will take you back to the Haymarket Bus Station via Grey Street.

As an alternative you would also enjoy a walk along the Gateshead side of the river. Take the regular Q2 or Q3 from Market Street. Alight at the Guildhall and walk along to and over the Millennium Bridge and then upstream past all the bridges as far as the Staithes where there is a lovely cafe overlooking the banks of the Tyne. Return back to the Guildhall for the bus back to the City Centre. It is possible to continue walking to the Metrocentre which will take about 40 minutes BUT after about 15 minutes you have to move away from the river and walk next to the road.

31. WYLAM TO NEWBURN. Catch the X84 service (destination Hexham) from Eldon Square Bus Station to Wylam. This departs hourly at 40 minutes past 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. 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 a small museum. Check opening times.

32 SOUTER LIGHTHOUSE / WHITBURN to SOUTH SHIELDS

Catch Go North East service 27 from Market Street to Heworth Interchange and change to the 558 at 37 minutes past the hour and alight at the coast road in Whitburn. From here the E1 which operates every 20 minutes (direction South Shields) will take you the short distance to Souter Lighthouse.

Opened in 1871, Souter remains an iconic beacon hooped in red and white and standing proud on the coastline midway between the Tyne and the Wear. Souter is a special place all year round and was the first lighthouse in the world designed and built to be powered by electricity. To the north, the Leas, is a two and a half mile stretch of limestone cliffs, wave-cut foreshore and coastal grassland. The cliffs and rock stacks of Marsden Bay are home to nesting Kittiwakes, Fulmar, Cormorants, Shags and Guillemots. South of the lighthouse is Whitburn Coastal Park and Nature Reserve – reclaimed colliery land, now a haven for wildlife. The 558 returns from Whitburn at 31 minutes past the hour. You may wish to walk from Whitburn to South Shields past Souter and this wonderful scenery with views to the north of Tynemouth and beyond. It is about 5 miles and a fantastic stroll on a fine day. From South Shields you can return to Newcastle on bus 26/27, the Metro or return to Whitburn on the E1/E2 or E6. If you want a more relaxing day out, I would also recommend a trip on the E1 between South Shields and Sunderland for views of the coast - it takes about 45 minutes.

Again, as previously, I have included two 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). Using this as a guide, a Cheap Day Return to Carlisle is £11.90. Booking a week in advance you may be able to get a return to York from as little as £12, Northallerton for £10.50 and Berwick on Tweed £11.50.

33 SERVICE 31X YORK TO HELMSLEY This is an infrequent service so do check times before travelling. (Reliance Motors 01904 768262) Times shown are for Mondays to Fridays during school holidays. The bus leaves from Station Avenue, turn left on leaving York Station and cross the first road junction. The stop is next to the small park, about 2 mins walk. The journey takes about 1 hr 15 minutes leaving 10.13am and 1.50pm, return from Helmsley at 12.40 and 4.00pm. On the way you go through farmland in the Vale of York before reaching the lovely Georgian town of Easingwold with its pleasant houses and market square. There follows shortly a good view of the carved white horse of Kilburn, lovely villages, the ruins of Byland Abbey , Ampleforth Village and College before arriving at the picturesque town of Helmsley where there is a castle, gardens, church, market square and plenty of cafes.

34 SERVICE 856 Northallerton to Hawes. Trains run on average once an hour between Newcastle and Northallerton and take about 40 minutes. The 856 runs all year round on Sundays and Bank Holidays departing from a stop opposite the station at 9.33am, 12.33 and 4.03pm, returning at 11.18am, 2.38pm and 5.28pm. It takes one hour 10 minutes to travel up beautiful Wensleydale (James Herriott Country) to Hawes.

The views are stunning, passing through lovely hamlets and villages, Ainsley, Bedale, West Witton, Aysgarth and Bainbridge. Just before Leyburn you will see, in the distance, on the left, Richard the Third's Castle at Middleham. After leaving Wensley, on the right, Bolton Castle where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned. Spring is particularly nice with lambs in stone enclosed fields and daffodils on village greens. There is plenty to do in Hawes (shops, cafes and museums-buy some Wensleydale cheese). Northallerton itself is a lovely town but it is a 10 minute walk from the station.

Happy travelling

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