



The Elders Council of Newcastle Transport Working Group



Introduction

For the last seven years we have prepared a leaflet giving some ideas for days out using a concessionary bus pass and this has been so successful that we have decided to do it again this year.

However, we emphasise again that you must check prices and the details of your journeys before you travel. You can check and get timetable leaflets at the Nexus Travel Centres in Newcastle or by calling the bus operators direct - most journeys from Newcastle are by Arriva or Go North East, start from Eldon Square bus station and times relate to Monday to Saturday unless otherwise stated. In many cases a younger person could accompany you by using an “Explorer” or even a cheaper “day ticket”.

Once again, we are again grateful to Mervin 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 2016 with a Concessionary Bus Pass

Two new destinations, Alston and Birdoswald: two new places to visit, Crook Hall and Butterfly World, also a new route to Bellingham with the old favourites brought up to date for our 8th year. Where possible the nearest free 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). Due to lack of space I have omitted Barnard Castle. Happy travelling and please phone me for more details or other ideas 0191 2855843.

Mervin Dixon - May 2016

1 DURHAM CITY (W). Express buses X21 and X12 leave at 09, 20, 39 and 50 minutes past the hour taking 53-55 minutes. The 21 is slower but also runs in the evening and on Sunday when the X's do not.

In Durham it is quite a long steep walk to the Market, Cathedral, Castle (£3.50) and Museum (£2.00) so take minibus 40 every 20 minutes from Stand A across North Road opposite the bus station. The covered market is probably the best in the North East and walks along the riverside are very pleasant. New this year is Crook Hall with Durham's "Secret" Gardens – well worth the £6.50 admission but not easy to find – start on Milburngate.

2 DARLINGTON. (M – Dolphin Centre) Go to Durham then service 7 every 15 minutes - total journey time from Newcastle is about 2 hours. I prefer taking the X10 on the hour to Stockton then X66/X67 from the Church at 13 or 43 minutes past - total time 1hr 45 minutes. To return this way leave Darlington at 5 minutes past the hour.

Darlington has good shops, an indoor market and on Mondays a small outdoor one. The interesting railway museum (£3.75) is just off the road to Durham three quarters of a mile out of town.

3 RICHMOND. (MH) Buses X26/X27 leave Darlington every 20 minutes taking 35 minutes. A nice 40 minute country ride is Dales & District 29 at 1.15pm which returns at 4.25pm. Richmond is a very attractive town with a castle (English Heritage), some narrow streets and a square worth exploring. Market Day is Saturday.

4 NORTHALLERTON. (Old Town Hall) Dales & District 72 leaves Darlington at 1.00 and returns at 4.22pm taking 50 minutes. For a very interesting alternative take Abbots X80 from Middlesbrough at 1.30pm, via Stokesley, arriving at 2.37pm.

The county town of North Yorkshire holds a good street market on Wednesday and Saturday. To get the most out of your visit telephone me for a copy of the "Town Trails" leaflet.

5 HARTLEPOOL. Take the X9 at half past the hour and change at Peterlee to frequent buses – total journey time 1 hour 20 minutes.

"Maritime Experience" is a dramatic reconstruction of naval life in Nelson's time (£7.00 for 1 visit or £8.50 for 5).

Nearby is the town museum – free! Stagecoach service 1 every 30 minutes takes a nice route from Hartlepool to Middlesbrough via Seaton Carew and High Clarence, for the Transporter. (see Middlesbrough)

6 STOCKTON. (MH) Get the X10 on the hour, it takes 1 hour 7 minutes – a double decker service going on to Middlesbrough.

The famous Street Market is on Wednesday and Saturday. A visit to Preston Park is worthwhile for its outstanding museum with a parade of Victorian shops (£1.50 valid for a year). Also in Preston Park is Butterfly World with a lovely collection of (live) butterflies (£3.50) – just get the frequent service 7 bus. The “steamer trip” to Yarm on the Teeside Princess is very good. Concessionary fares are £7.50 single or £9.50 return. It runs most Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.00pm. Phone 01642 608038 to check. If you take a single then explore Yarm – a small Market town, return to Stockton on the 7 or better, get the 17 at 28 minutes past the hour to Middlesbrough then the X9 or X10 home.

7 MIDDLESBROUGH. (B) Buses leave Newcastle on the hour (X10 via Stockton) and the half hour (X9 via Peterlee and Billingham) – either takes 1 hour 20 minutes. Middlesbrough has a good shopping centre, also the Dorman Museum and MIMA, a gallery of Modern Art, both free. The TRANSPORTER BRIDGE (60p) is unique in England and well worth a visit, but can be closed for high winds. Get a local bus TR1 or TR2 from stand 15 in Middlesbrough bus station to the South side of the Transporter Bridge where there is a small exhibition, don't miss the winding house. From the North side it is a short walk to High Clarence for service 1 to Hartlepool or Middlesbrough every 30 minutes. Middlesbrough is the starting point for buses to Redcar (visit the “Vertical Pier” - there is a lift to the viewing platform and it's free – closed in high winds), Saltburn (don't miss the Cliff Tramway- 50p), Whitby, Scarborough, Great Ayton, Stokesley and Northallerton – all worth visiting.

8 WHITBY. There are 2 routes from Middlesbrough, X93 (Scarborough bus) across the moors takes 1 hour 8 minutes and leaves at 20 minutes past each hour while the X4 via Redcar, Saltburn and the scenic coastal route takes 1 hour 51 minutes, leaving on the hour and half hour – try this one way.

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 only bus to the Abbey is the “Open Topper” concessionary fare £5 for a day town tour ticket.

9 SCARBOROUGH. (Station) The X93 takes 2 hours 18 minutes from Middlesbrough leaving at 20 minutes past the hour – it can be crowded both ways. Buses back are at 50 minutes past each hour until 3.50pm, then 4.55, 5.20, 5.55 and 6.25pm – check connections at Middlesbrough.

Scarborough is a large seaside resort with a range of attractions and shops.

10 BISHOP AUCKLAND. (B) Double deck Bus X21 from Newcastle runs at 9 and 39 minutes past each hour taking 1 hour 27 minutes. In the evenings and on Sundays use service 21/X21.

The main attraction is Auckland Castle, formerly the Bishop's Palace, open daily, except Tuesday, from 10.30am to 4.00pm. Admission £4. The surrounding parkland is ideal for walks and is free! The Town Hall in the Market Place houses the library and information centre. Take bus 1 or 5 to Shildon for "Locomotion" National Railway Museum – free entry and well worth a visit.

11 STANHOPE. (Dales Centre) A nice way to reach Stanhope (but not on Saturday or Sunday) is to take the X70 at 10.25am to Consett (W) – or an earlier bus and look around, you may be pleasantly surprised, continue on the 764 at 11.40am across the moors via Castleside and Tow Law to Wolsingham – cross the road and wait for the 101 at 12.30pm to Stanhope. To come home get the 101 at 1.51, 3.00, 3.51 or 5.00pm to Bishop Auckland then the X21 to Newcastle or get off the 101 at Crook and take the 46 to Durham. Stanhope is an attractive small town. The Market Place is flanked by 3 interesting buildings; the Castle (really a mansion built in 1798), the Rectory rebuilt in 1821 and St. Thomas Church of Norman origin but much altered. In front of the Church is a fossilised tree stump some 320 million years old!

Visit Durham Dales Centre a little to the West of the Church and set in the Castle gardens – it's free. There are several places to lunch in Stanhope. To explore upper Weardale get bus 102 at 1.00pm to Rookhope, back at 1.30pm or the longer 101 to Cowshill at 1.45 or 2.45pm with an hour round trip – or stop at Ireshopeburn for the Weardale Museum (£3). Phone 01388 517433 to check days.

12 HEXHAM. Service X85 at 10 minutes past each hour takes 47 minutes: 85 or 685 runs at 45 minutes past taking 51 minutes, while X84 at 40 minutes past takes an attractive route via Wylam with a journey time of 1 hour. Double deck service 10 via Prudhoe, for its castle (English Heritage), runs at 25 and 55 minutes past the hour and finally, my favourite, 74 takes a lovely country route leaving at 10.35am, 12.35 and 2.35pm; both the 10 and 74 take just over 1 hour 20minutes.

In Hexham don't miss the Abbey with its excellent free museum and surrounding parkland or visit the Old Gaol (£3.50). A nice local bus trip is to Newbrough on service 683 at 40 minutes past each hour taking 20 minutes each way. Market day is Tuesday.

13 BELLINGHAM Service 880 leaves Hexham at 11.40am or 1.45pm for a 45 minute journey up the pleasant North Tyne Valley - return buses are at 2.30 and 4.30pm.

An interesting alternative on Tuesday or Friday is to take ADAPT service 694 at 1.45pm

from Hexham. It is a small minibus going to Keilder which runs to Bellingham on the east side of the North Tyne Valley calling at the village of Birtley.

Bellingham is a quiet country town with places for lunch and a really good Heritage Centre (£2.50) where the 880 terminates. There are also nice walks close by.

14 ALLENDALE TOWN and ALLENHEADS are 25 and 45 minutes South of Hexham respectively. Bus 688 leaves for Allendale Town at 10.38 and 11.43am, 1.43 and 3.43pm with all, except the first, continuing to Allenheads. Take a trip all the way with, perhaps, a refreshment break one way in Allendale Town – a nice large village.

15 ALSTON.

Take the 10.45am service 85 (Carlisle bus) to Haltwhistle arriving 12.13pm then at 12.40 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 2.10pm from Wentworth Car Park near Waitrose – NOT the bus station. This market day service arrives at 3.30pm. Return at 5.06pm from Hendersons Garage on Go North East X81 which gets to Hexham at 6.05pm for Arriva 85 at 6.27pm due into Newcastle 7.23pm. The ride from Hexham to Alston goes up the lovely West Allan 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.

Alston is England's highest market town and has a station for the narrow gauge South Tynedale Railway. There is a train at 3.45pm, back at 4.50pm but the fare is high - £9.00. Otherwise get off at the first stop (Townhead) and walk down with a stop for tea.

16 HADRIAN'S WALL. Until 25th September Bus AD 122 runs to Haltwhistle from Hexham at 9.10am and hourly, except 2.10pm, until 5.10pm. It calls at several Roman sites: Chesters (English Heritage), Housesteads (English Heritage and National Trust), Vindolanda (£6) - (1.10pm finishes here while even-hour, eg 10.10am, buses do not call) and Walltown for the Roman Army Museum (£5). From Haltwhistle or Greenhead you could continue to Carlisle on the 685

17 BIRDOSWALD Roman Fort (English Heritage) – until 24th September. Take bus 685 at 9.45am to Haltwhistle 11.13am; then 185 at 11.30am getting to Birdoswald at 12.01pm. Return at 3.45pm change at Greenhead Hotel, 4.00pm, for the AD122 at 4.16pm to Hexham via the scenic Roman Wall route arriving 5.05pm to get the X84 via Wylam at 5.10pm reaching Newcastle at 6.10pm. Birdoswald, my favourite Roman Fort, has a visitor centre and a cafe for your lunch break.

18 CARLISLE. (The Lanes) Bus service 85/685 takes 2 hours 11 minutes departing from Newcastle at 45 minutes past each hour.

Carlisle, an attractive small City, has a red sandstone Cathedral and an intact Castle (English Heritage). There are also two museums, a good shopping centre and nice parks.

19 MARYPORT. (Near Harbour) Bus 300 leaves Carlisle at 10 minutes past each hour taking 1 hour 4 minutes – direct buses return at 53 minutes past the hour. I suggest you come back at 3.00 or 5.20pm on bus 60 up the lovely Solway coast to Silloth then bus 400 to Carlisle at 3.43 or 6.03pm getting home at 7.23 or 9.18pm.

Maryport is a quiet little town with a nice harbour, an aquarium (£6.50), Roman Museum (£4) and “Maritime Experience (£3, not Monday or Wednesday) all reached by the rather hilly Senhouse Street.

20 PENRITH (B) Service 104 leaves Carlisle at 2 and 32 minutes past the hour taking 40 minutes. In July, August and September you could travel on Wrights 888 (see Keswick) arriving 12 noon and returning at 5.05pm – but it could be full from Keswick.

Penrith is a pleasant town with a ruined castle and a small free museum.

21 KESWICK. (Booth’s) Take the 9.45am service 685 to Carlisle then the 554 at 12.10pm getting to Keswick at 1.21pm. Between 1st July and 25th September, Wright Bros Coach 888 leaves Newcastle Coach Station at 9.20am. This is too early for the Concessionary Pass, except on Saturday, but you can board at 9.31am at Lemington Road Ends (Stagecoach buses 10, 39, 40 and X82). The 888 takes a magnificent route which is one of the highest in England (at Hartside Cafe). There is a 20 minutes refreshment break in Alston, arrival in Keswick is 12.30pm. On Sunday the 888 leaves Newcastle at 10.05am reaching Keswick at 1.00pm. To return from Keswick, take the 554 to Carlisle at 5.35pm getting you home at 9.18pm or the 888 in July, August or September which leaves at 4.30pm alighting at the General Hospital about 7.25pm for local buses.

Keswick is worth several visits with a variety of things to do there. A boat trip around Derwentwater takes 50 minutes with boats leaving every half hour £10.25, a conducted tour of the very interesting Pencil Factory Museum, £3.50 or visit the Keswick Museum (£4). There are two spectacular bus routes from Keswick, the 78 open top service up Borrowdale to Seatoller and back takes about an hour (check times), then my favourite the 77 and 77A circular routes to Buttermere climbing Honister and Whinlatter passes. They leave at half past each hour until 4.30pm (also 4.00pm) taking 1 hour 47 minutes. The 4.30pm goes on at 6.20pm to Carlisle as service 73A via Mungrisedale and Caldbeck. You would have 40 minutes in Carlisle and reach Newcastle at 10.18pm.

22 MORPETH. (B) Direct buses on services X14, X15, X16, X18 leave Haymarket every 15 minutes taking 34 minutes. The 43 at 17 minutes past the hour via Cramlington takes 1 hour 5 minutes whilst the 44 at 39 minutes past the hour goes via Dinnington, Stannington and Stobhill, a very interesting route, taking 56 minutes – returning at 44 minutes past most hours.

Visit the free Bagpipe Museum or walk in the park and up the riverside to Mitford Road.

23 ASHINGTON (W) and NEWBIGGIN Buses X21, X22 run frequently from Haymarket to Ashington – journey time 57 minutes while the X20 at half past each hour takes only 42 minutes. From Ashington to Newbiggin routes X21, 35 and 35A run frequently and take about 15 minutes.

Ashington has a really good street market on Fridays while Newbiggin has an attractive sea front and the Maritime Centre (£2.50) at the North end of the promenade.

24 ALNWICK. (M) X15 from Haymarket at 33 minutes past each hour takes 1 hour 23 minutes, for a scenic ride the X18 leaves at 3 minutes past each hour taking 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 for pleasant seaside walks. Alnwick is an interesting town to walk around. Visits to the Castle, the home of the Duke of Northumberland, cost £12.50 and the famous Gardens £10.45. Visit Barter Books in the old station with a huge collection of 2nd hand books and if you return a book you get half price credit against another purchase. Take buses 418 or X18 at 10.02am then hourly to the coastal towns of Craster (harbour and kippers!), Seahouses (boats to the Farne Islands) and Bamburgh (Castle £10.50 and Grace Darling Museum –free)

25 ROTHBURY. (Bridge Street) Service X14 at 18 minutes past each hour takes 1 hour 16 minutes, check your return times. Another way to Rothbury is to go to Alnwick then get Spirit buses service 12 at 2.10pm or 4.35pm taking 25 minutes.

Rothbury is a pleasant small town with a large green and several tea shops. All Saints Church dates from 13th Century but was largely rebuilt in 1850. Spirit Buses run a marvellous circular trip via Alwinton on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 10.45am and 2.45pm taking 1 hour, the bus then continuing to Alnwick.

26 WOOLER – is easily reached from Alnwick in 45 minutes, ideally by the 470 bus at 12.45pm via Chillingham (Castle £8) but also by the 473 at 11.55am and 1.55pm. The best way back to Newcastle, but only on Wednesday, is the Glen Valley coach 710 from Wooler at 3.40pm due in about 5.00pm. You can do the circuit in reverse order leaving ST. THOMAS STREET at 11.30am (Wednesday) arriving Wooler at 12.50pm. Buses from Wooler to Alnwick on Service 470 run at 2.45pm but 1.45pm on Wednesday in school term. Service 473 runs at 5.05pm.

Wooler is a nice small town with plenty of places to eat, the library and tourist office are at the North end of town.

27 BERWICK. (W) The direct bus is X15 leaving Haymarket at 33 minutes past the even hour (8.33am, 10.33am etc) with a journey time of 2 hours 10 minutes – alight at “Golden Square”, the first stop across the Bridge. The 10.03am journey on X18 runs by the long very attractive coastal route via Amble, Alnwick and Seahouses arriving at 1.52pm. Return on X15 at 3.07, 5.17 or 7.17pm. Southbound X18’s leave Berwick at 2.07 and 6.17pm. Try the X18 in one direction with, perhaps, a break of journey in Alnwick. Berwick, England’s most northerly town, is an attractive Georgian Market Town, one of only three towns in England where you can walk right round the walls – free! There is a notable Town Hall of 1754 and Barracks dating from 1719 (English Heritage). The bridges over the Tweed are impressive - the Old Bridge built in 1610-34, the New Bridge of 1925-28 and Stephenson’s Royal Border railway bridge of 1847. The tourist office in Marygate has a free leaflet for a walk around the town.

28 SCOTLAND. The Tyne & Wear Pass is not officially valid in Scotland but Perryman’s will let us travel on service 67 at 11.10am or 1.09pm via Kelso all the way to Melrose and Gallashiels via Coldstream. (1 hour 43 minutes) and on service 60 which also runs to Melrose and Gallashiels but via Duns so come back on this. Check return times. Note your journey must start or finish in England so visits to Duns, Kelso, Melrose and Gallashiels would have to be on separate trips. You can also travel to attractive Eyemouth on Perrymans 235 or 253. (Museum £3). Except for Eyemouth and Kelso, Scottish trips can only reasonably be made by getting the 8.33am from Haymarket on Saturday.

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