



Tyne and Wear Heritage Way

Section 8: Washington Old Hall to Roker Pier (9.5 miles)



Heritage Information

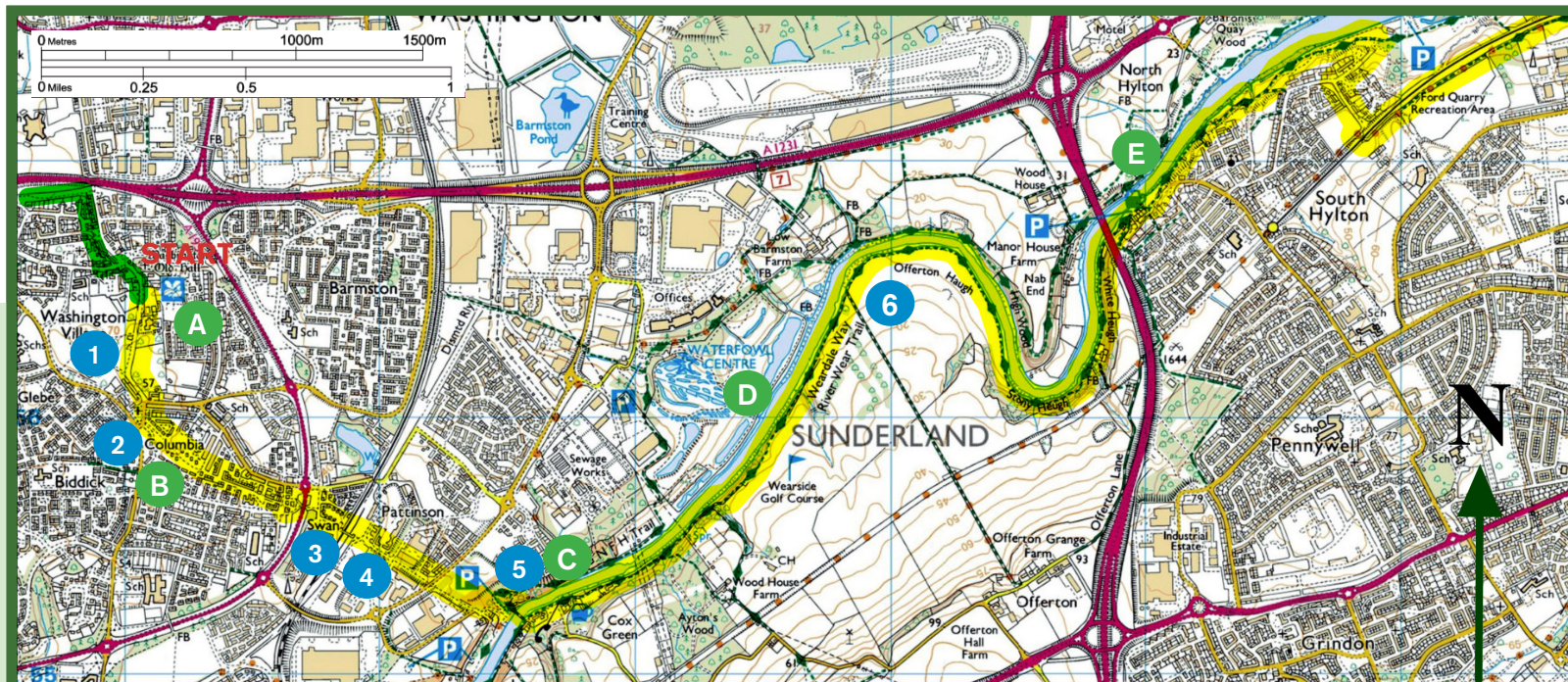
A Washington Old Hall was the family home of the ancestors of George Washington, first president of the US. The present building dates from the early 17th century but the original house may be as early as 1183.

B On your left as you reach Emmerson Terrace there are the last old urinals in the area, made of good, red engineering bricks. The tree-lined path is on the line of a waggonway which served Glebe Colliery and went right down to Cox Green.

C The village of Cox Green was recorded as early as 1108. It was then called Cosse which later became Cokksgrene in 1248. The 'Alice' well was still in use until the 1940s.

D The Washington Wildfowl and Wetlands Centre was designed by Sir Peter Scott and established in 1975. It is the 3rd largest wildfowl centre in Europe. It is a sanctuary for water birds and also has a successful breeding programme for some of the most endangered species.

E The old ships moored on the other side of the river are a reminder of the 400 registered boatyards, once all along the riverbank.



The Walk: Section 8

Start: Washington Old Hall (NZ310 565)

- 1 With the gates of Washington Old Hall behind you, turn **L** and walk to reach a grassed area with iron railings on your left. Continue to a gate. Enter and cross the grass, aiming to the right of a white cottage, to reach Emmerson Terrace.
- 2 Cross the terrace and take a few steps to the **R** to rejoin the main road. Turn **L**, with Glebe Methodist Church on your right across the road. Just past the church, turn **L** onto a tree lined pedestrian path through a housing estate and continue until reaching a road (Oak Street). Cross the road and turn **R**, then **L** after the shops. Go under the subway and straight ahead to a road.
- 3 Turn **R** for 30 yards and then cross the road into what looks like a dead end. You are now back on the line of the waggonway. At the far corner, the path continues between high metal fences, crossing the trackbed of the British Rail Leamside Branch. It leads to Pattinson Industrial Estate.
- 4 Go straight ahead down Wilden Road. At the T-junction, cross straight over to rejoin the waggonway. Continue through a subway then an attractive woodland stretch before arriving at Glebe House Farm. Turn **L** on the road just before the farm leading down to a car park. Cross the footbridge over the River Wear to Cox Green.
- 5 Turn **R** and soon see the old well. Return to the bridge and, with the river on your **L**, follow the riverside path for at least half a mile until it veers away from the river up the second set of steps. Go through woods above the river. On the opposite bank is the Washington Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

F Claxheugh Rock was originally called Clack's Heugh – that is a crag on Mr. Clack's property. Locally it is called Klacky Rock. It is a magnesium limestone cliff formed in the late Permian period. The steep grassy slopes and ledges support a range of plants special to this area.

G The cycleway here is the Stephenson Way. It is on the line of the old railway from Hetton on the Hill to the staithes at Wearmouth Bridge.

H At the roundabout, look up to see the old street name, Railway Road, on the side of the building.

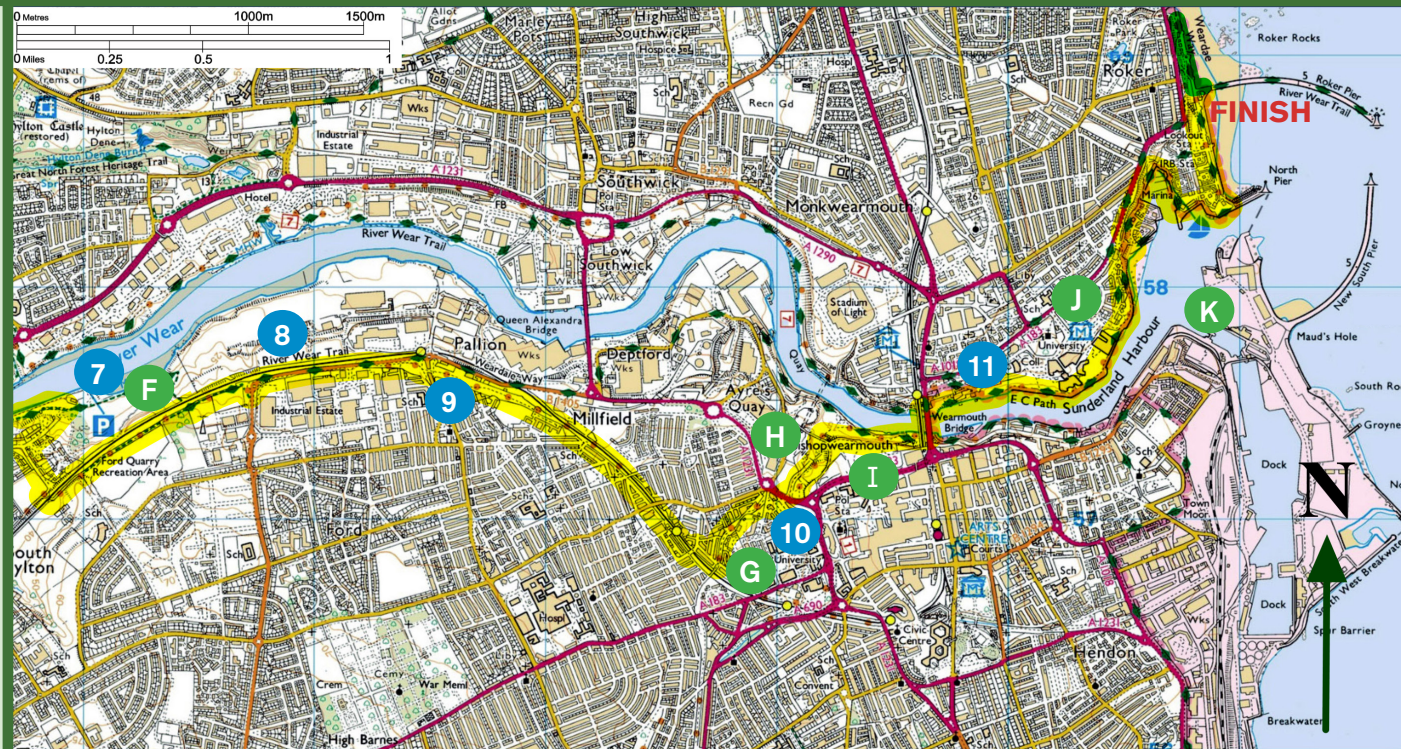
I Galleys Gill Road was the area where coal was brought down to the river to be loaded onto colliers for shipment to London. The surrounding cliffs are the same dolomite as Claxheugh Rock.

The 1st Wearmouth Bridge opened in 1796. It was built in response to the rapid development of industry in Sunderland and was originally a toll bridge. Before that, the only way to cross the river was by ferry. Robert Stephenson designed a two-year reconstruction of the bridge in 1857-9. The modern bridge was built in 1929. The Railway Bridge alongside opened in 1879. At the time, it was the largest hog-back iron rail bridge in the world.

J Glass making in Sunderland dates back to 674 AD. Benedict Biscop, founder of Wearmouth-Jarrow Priory brought skilled craftsmen from Gaul to create the first stained glass window in England for St. Peter's Church, Monkwearmouth. To visit the church and ruins of the priory, turn left away from the river beside the Sunderland Glass Centre and walk a short distance uphill.

The main development in glass making was in the 18th century. Cheap coal and high quality sand, along with excellent shipping links, made Sunderland an ideal place. Most glass was used for windows and bottles but the skill of local glass makers was so prized that they were given the task of producing a cut and engraved glass service of 200 pieces for the Marquis of Londonderry.

K The River Wear had a thriving ship-building industry until the 1970s but there are few signs of it now.



6 Keep on the riverside path for over a mile until the A19 bridge is seen ahead. Passing under the bridge, continue alongside the river for a further mile to reach a small car park. Ahead is the imposing Claxheugh Rock, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

7 From the car park, take the access road that leads uphill. On reaching housing, take the second turn **L** (Keelman's Rd). Continue to join a pedestrian and cycleway. Bear **R** on this route, then, after a few yards, turn **L** to go under the Metro, and **L** again. Go straight ahead, with the Metro line on your **L** to reach a main road (European Way).

8 Turn **L** along the road, cross to the far side to join a cycleway. Continue until the sign for Pallion Metro Station can be seen. Bear **R** and take the route that crosses over a busy road on a pedestrianised bridge.

9 Follow the cycleway straight ahead with the Metro line on your **L** to reach a main road. Turn **L**, cross the road to take the steps down to Millfield Metro Station. Go past the station with the Metro line now on the **R** to reach a T-junction where a cycleway comes in from the **R** over a footbridge. Turn **L** away from the Metro line and continue on the cycleway to reach a busy roundabout.

10 Cross the road towards a high metal fence and turn **R**. Go downhill to the first turning on the **L**. This gated road is Galleys Gill road which leads down to the waterfront. Bear **R** to go under the bridges then turn **R** up the curving cobbled road. At the top, turn **R** and go towards Wearmouth Bridge.

11 Cross the bridge and, at the far end, descend the steps to the riverside path which passes Sunderland University and The National Glass Centre. Just before reaching a road, look for some steps on the **R** leading back down to the river. Continue along the riverside path, round the marina and on to the sea front and Roker Pier.