

Intro2Bellingham



The Heritage Centre Bellingham

Explore the Heritage of the Northern Borders

No, you're not going to another country when you come to **Bellingham**.

(But you'll be pretty close to Scotland, which is less than 30kms away.)

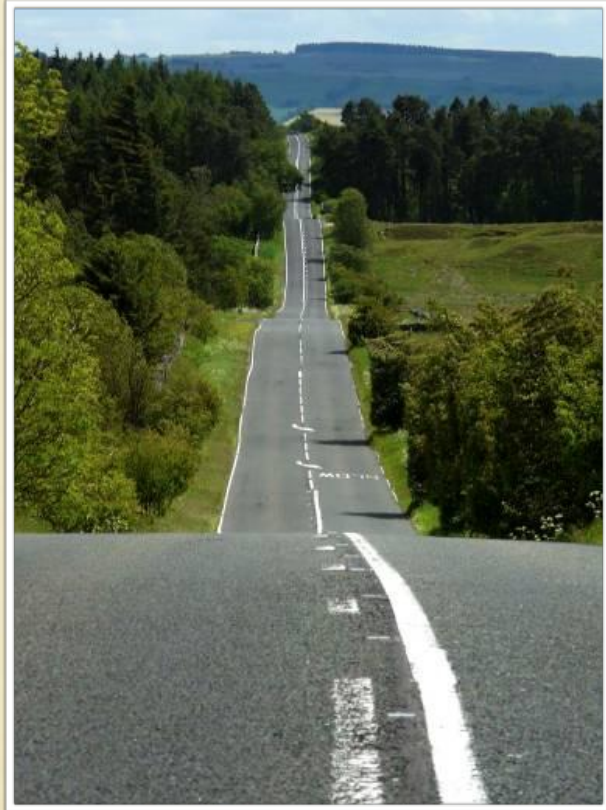


Courtesy Richard Dam

This is the **Northumbrian** flag.

We started using it in 1995. You'll see it a lot when you come because we're proud of our heritage.

You may come by this road.



It's the **A68** and was first built by the **Romans** nearly 2000 years ago. It starts from their military base at Corbridge and leads into Scotland. It may be straight but it can be a bumpy ride!

You'll pass signs of places using these words.

Crag Linn Haugh Hope Rigg Chester Fell



Stead Common Dale Cleugh Knowe Burn

You'll also pass brown signs like this.
They tell you what's nearby.



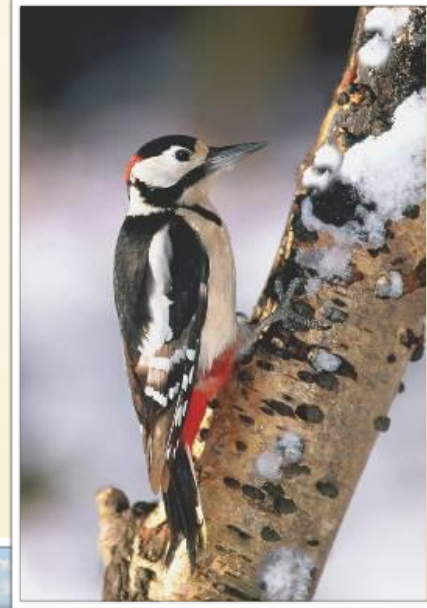
One of these is a
World Heritage Site.

But, whichever road you take, you're bound to see this sign.



Northumberland National Park is a huge area, and we're on the edge of it.

Northumberland National Park is all about...



Courtesy Northumberland National Park

It's huge, yet only 2000 people live in the Park.

Bellingham is on the edge of the National Park, in some of the most beautiful countryside in the UK.



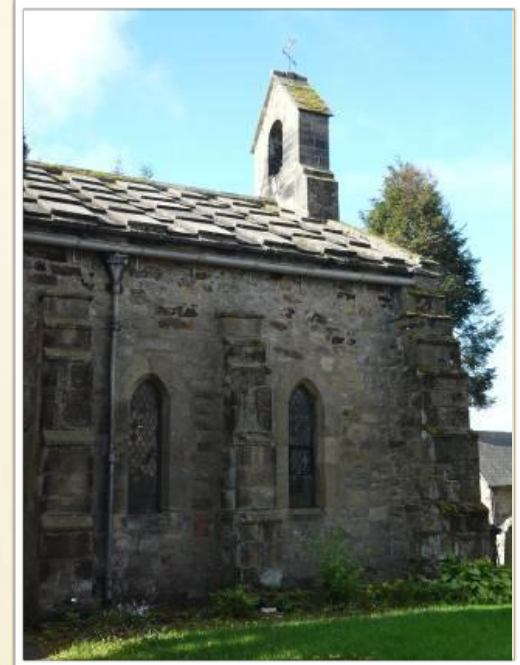
But, a thousand years ago, much of it was forest, which was used for hunting. The owner was Alan de Bellingham. He was a forester and chose hunting horns as his coat of arms.

This will tell you what's in and around our village.



It's the biggest place around, with a population of 1227.

We've some special buildings.



Including the Town Hall.



It's the focal point of lots of community activities.

And a river and a burn.



Meet some of the locals... ice skating on the river.



Skating on Tyne
at Bellingham.
17.2.1917



Yes! We know it's dangerous to walk on frozen ice,
but the river was very shallow at this spot.

Here's some of us on our way to school.



It was the only way we could get there if you lived on remote farms.



A saddler was important if you owned a horse.

A blacksmith too.

We grew up learning a lot about animals.



Even having some as pets.

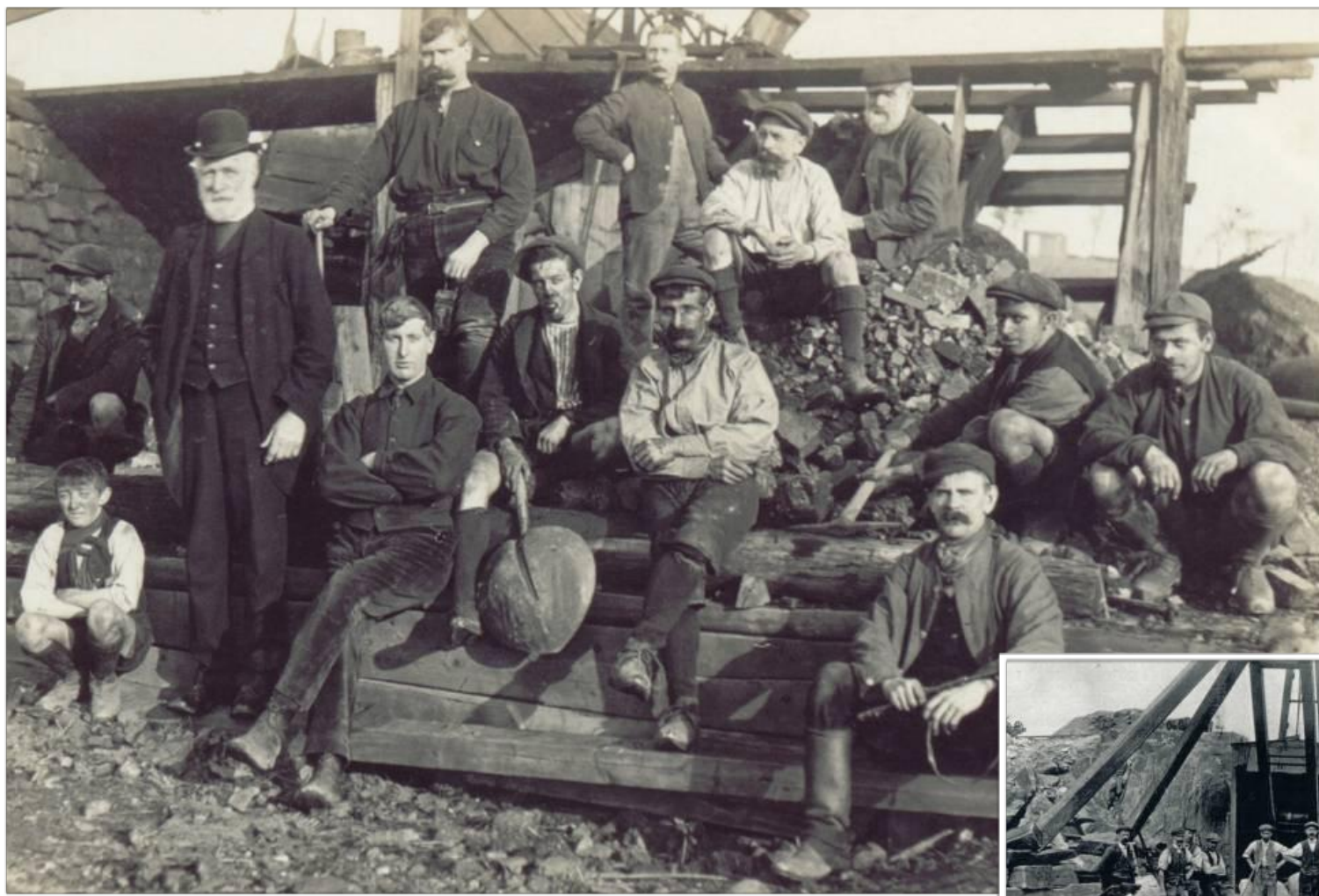
After we left school most of us worked on a farm.



It was hard work.



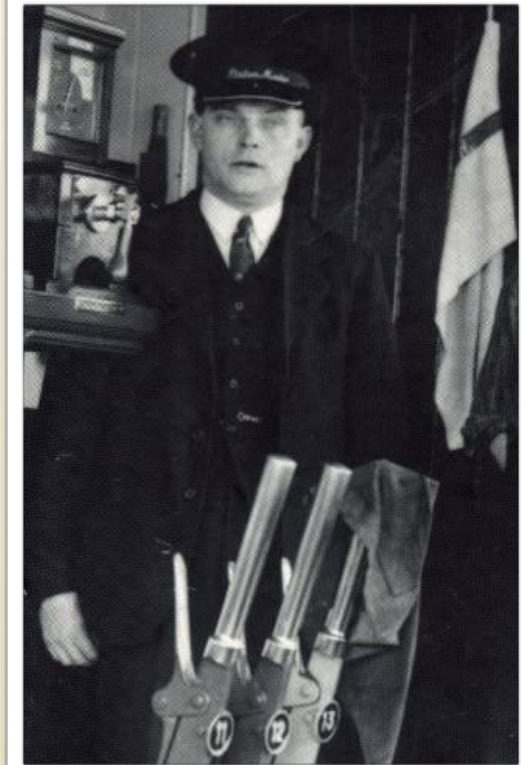
Others worked in local mines and quarries.



That was very hard work.
Especially for the boys.

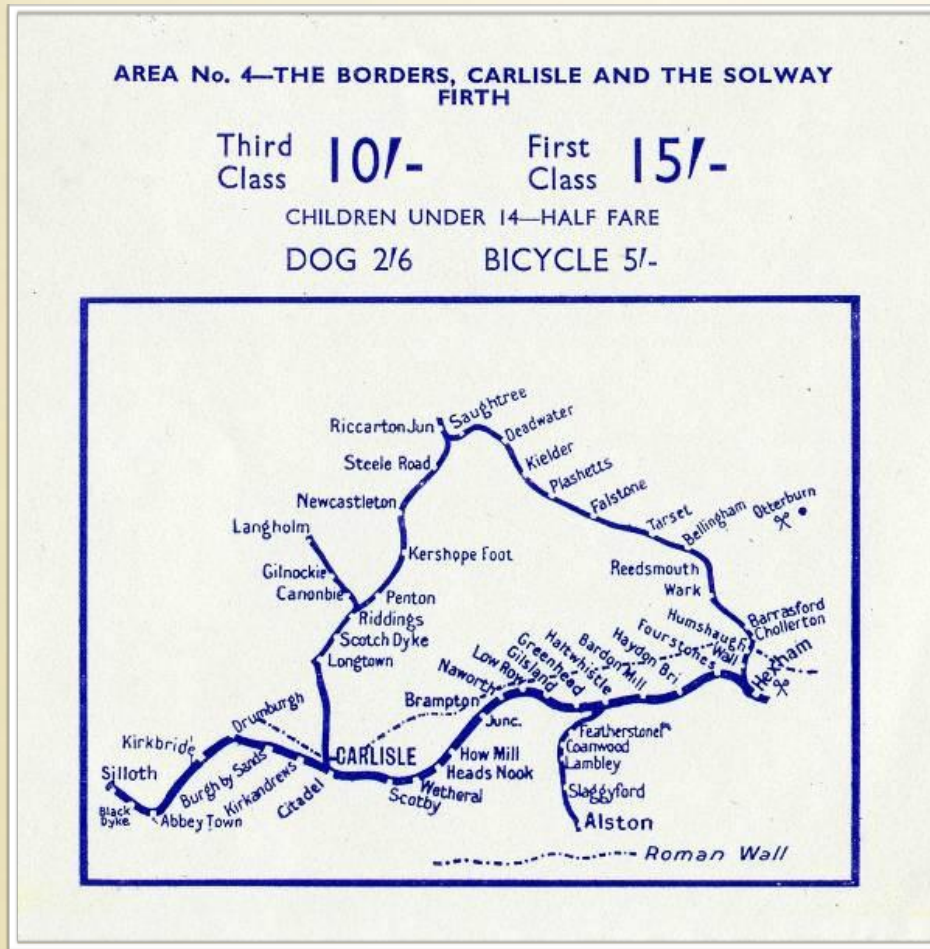


Some people also worked on the railways.



The line to Bellingham opened in 1862, but it closed to passengers in 1956. When you visit us at the Heritage Centre you'll see what's left of the railway station.

From Bellingham you could travel to all these places.



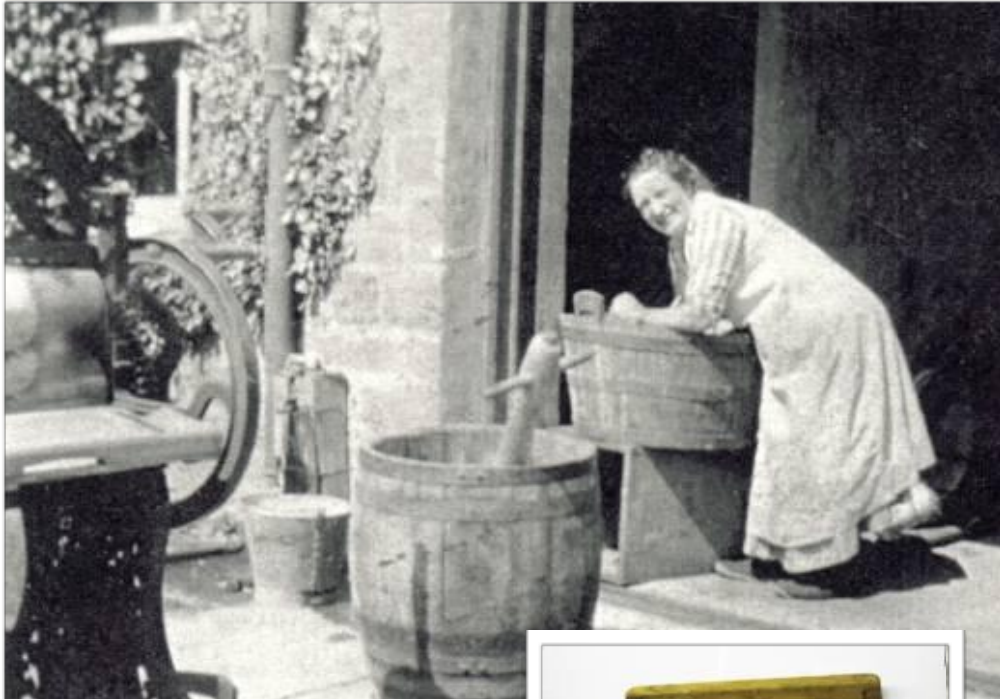
This was before there were cars and when most people still travelled by horse and cart.

Women had different jobs when they left school.
Some worked on farms; others in shops.



Many became servants for rich families.

But for most women their place was in the home after they married – looking after the family.



That was hard work too.

Girls learned how to do domestic chores at school.



Today, farming is what most people still do.



These are just a few jobs to be done – working in all weathers.

Some people work in nearby quarries.



Courtesy Hanson UK

These days men use machines to dig out whinstone.
It's a very hard stone which is crushed up for roads.

Other people work for the Forestry Commission.



Courtesy Forestry Commission

They work at Kielder Forest.
It's the biggest forest in the country.

Kielder Forest was planted after World War One because there was a shortage of timber.



Lots of men were employed to plant saplings (small trees), look after them and then chop them down when they grew very tall.

New villages were built specially for them and their families.

But, the forest isn't just about growing trees to chop down for timber.



The rangers also look after lots of birds and animals who live in the forest.

But one of these animals is not welcome.



Courtesy Forestry Commission & Northumbrian Water

In the 1970s more water was needed for north east industries, so a reservoir was created at Kielder.



It's the biggest in the UK.

When the valley was flooded, people had to move out and their homes and farms.



Courtesy Forestry Commission

At the bottom of the reservoir there's also a village and coal mine called Plashetts.



At one time up to 90 children went to the school there.

That's a lot for around here.

Today, both Kielder Forest and Reservoir attract lots of tourists.



Many come for outdoor activities.

Lots of young people stay at Hawkthirst Scout Camp on the shores of the reservoir.



Enjoying many different activities and exploring the area.



This is just one area inside our Heritage Centre.



Inside the telephone box you can listen to people talking about their lives. We call it our Tardis – as it takes you back in time.

But, our Heritage Centre became so full that we bought these old carriages to give us more space.



Volunteers restored them, doing many hard, heavy and dirty jobs.



In fact, the Heritage Centre was set up and is run by people who give their time for free.

The carriages are next to the platform of the old railway station.

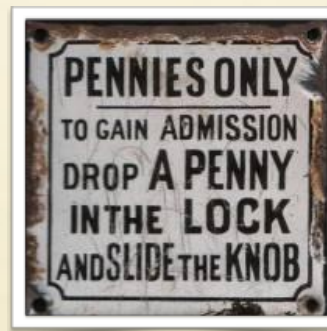
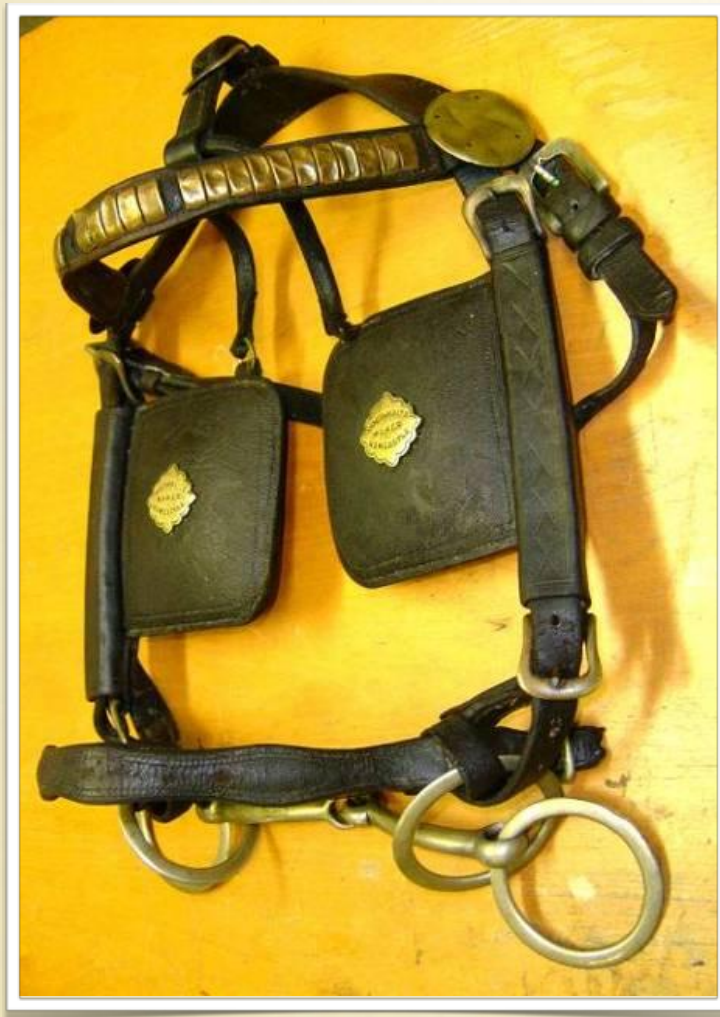


When you come, you'll see that most of the station buildings are still here.

So, when you come to visit us...



You'll see some fascinating things.
Some, you can even hold, use or try on.



Where do you think these objects were used?

You'll also see this colourful mural that a local artist painted for us.



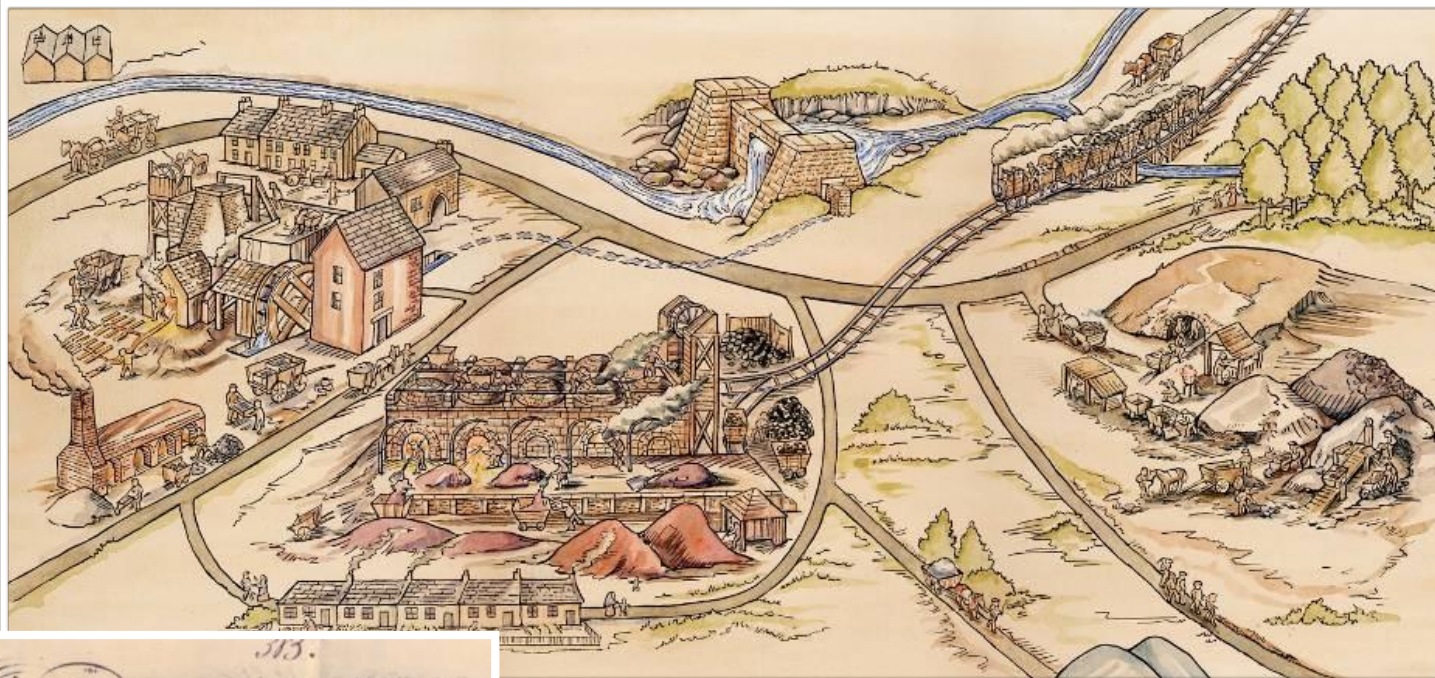
It's all about the history of Northumberland.

Then, from outside our Centre you can go on a magical walk up to Hareshaw Linn.



It was an exciting walk for us too, as you'll see from this cartoon.

You'll pass by the site of the Hareshaw Iron Works.



Just outside our Heritage Centre is this row of houses.
It's one of six streets built for the workers at the Iron Works.

Or, you may want to explore our great village.



We've got stories about sneaky robbers, a disastrous flood and a magical well.