

Our Green Unpleasant Land – a tour of the mining legacy in the West Allen and Nent valleys.

PART ONE approx. 1.5 hours

Leave the farm and zero your trip where the farm lane meets the public road.

Turn left NSP

00.8 Keep left in Broomley

01.1 keep right

01.9 turn left onto A68 – BEWARE fast traffic from right

02.8 turn right SP Healey

03.7 keep right on bend

05.7 turn right SP Riding Mill

05.8 turn left SP Prospect Hill

07.8 turn left SP Blanchland

08.1 turn right B6306 SP Hexham

08.6 turn left after red post box

09.4 turn right NSP

10.4 turn left to racecourse

11.0 Straight over to racecourse

13.6 turn left

16.1 keep left B6304 Allendale/Carrshield

17.3 keep left B6295 Allendale

19.3 turn right B6303 Carrshield

19.8 On your left is the site of the Allen Smelt Mill, now home to the Allendale Brewery. Like most smelting works it had a chimney, but more about that later.

20.0 straight over to Carrshield

22.3 look over to you right and you will see the top of the smelting works chimneys – over 1.5 miles long, underground – as with many chimneys small boys were sent to scrape the metals that condensed on the sides.

26.9 From the road you can see the Barney Crag site. Turn right to go down the track to see the ruined workings, mine water outfall and the repairs undertaken in 2017-18

IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE SITE THE NEXT READINGS WILL BE 0.2 OUT

28.1 *The Coalcleugh mine discharge had broken out of its channel and was destabilising the spoil that makes up the hillside. This had to be contained and fed back into the river. In 2015 a licence was given to test for gold. Have you heard of the Coalcleugh Gold Rush? That says it all. As you go up the hill there are various humps, bumps and stonework on the right hand side. Some of these are ventilation shafts for the Nent Force level, a 8km tunnel that allowed miners and ore to be moved between Allen and Nent valleys started in 1776*

28.4 The humps and bumps on the right are spoil heaps and capped mine or ventilation shafts

29.5 Turn right A689 Nenthead

30.1 Turn left and immediate left into Nenthead Museum car park – or park at Miners Arms if you are going there. Next to the Miners Arms is the new Arts & Visitor Centre with café. There are public toilets just outside the car park.

PART TWO

Zero trip at carpark exit and turn left

00.1 turn left C2C blue sign

02.3 turn right SP Alston

02.4 *if you park on the left, also some space on the right, you can see the stabilisation work on the Garrigill Burn. Also on the right through the gate is an information board showing how the mine operated*

06.0 turn right SP Hexham

21.4 *Langley Castle – does cream teas*

22.7 turn right onto A69

42.3 arrive in Newcastle – I hope you can find your way home

Hope you have enjoyed the trip.