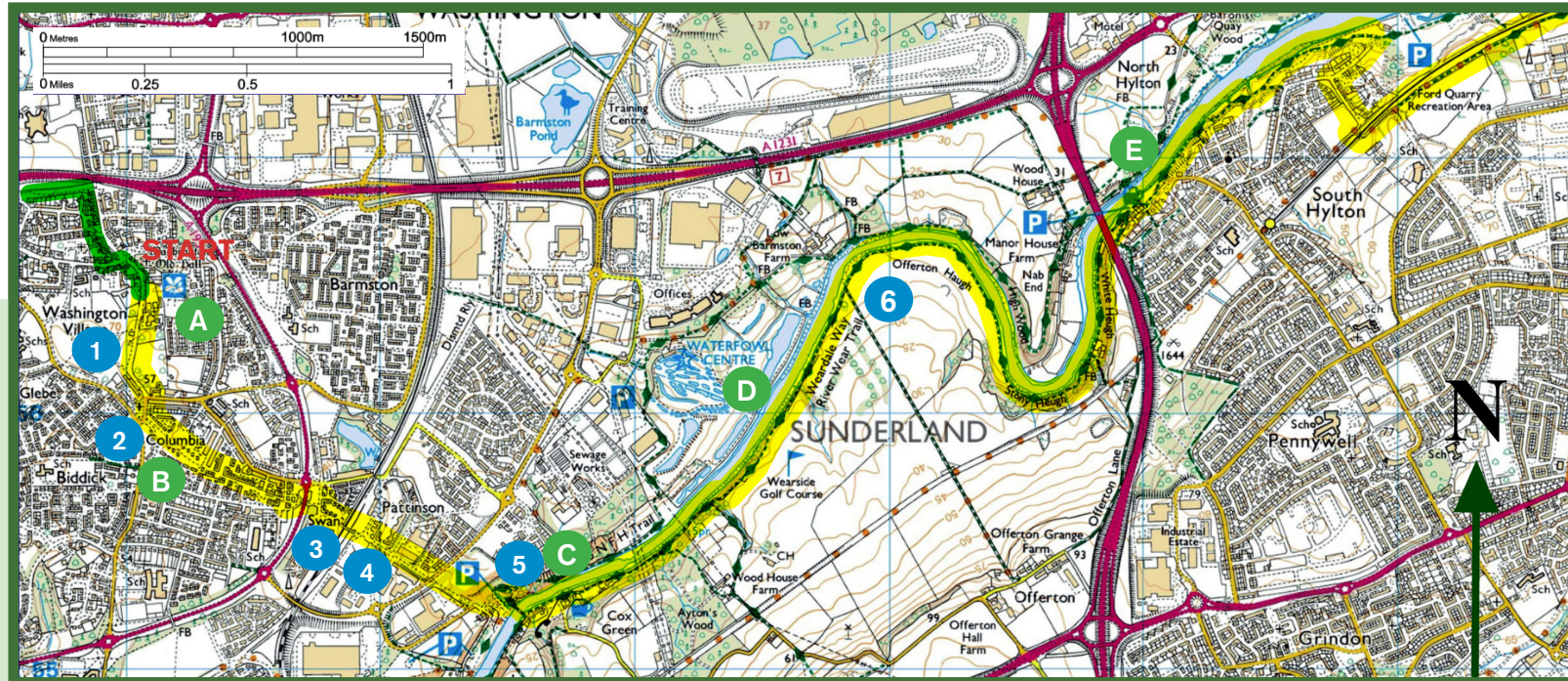


# Tyne and Wear Heritage Way

## 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 Northern Spire Bridge opened 29th August, 2018.

**H** Lime was a major local industry. These kilns were built and extended over generations.

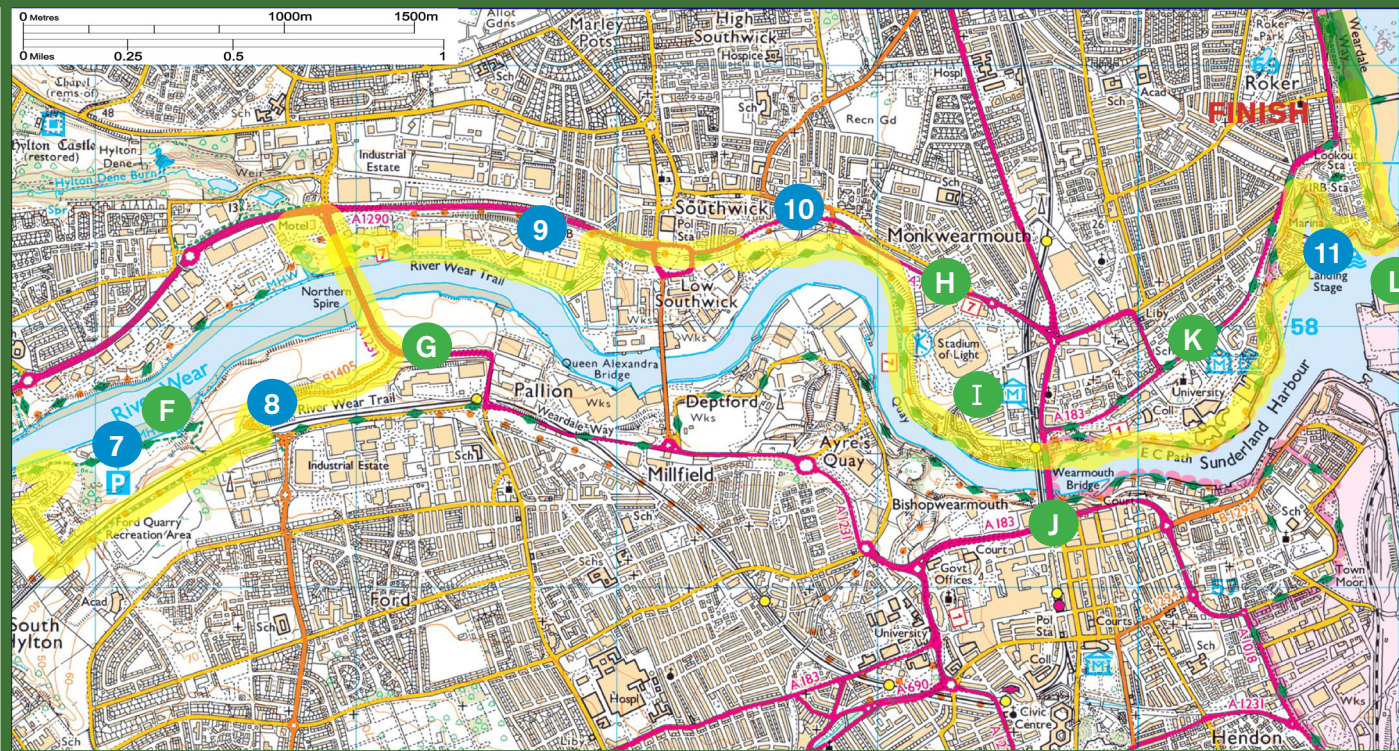
**I** Wearmouth Colliery was the last deep coal mine to close in the area. First opened in 1835, it continued to produce until 1993, despite many accidents. The huge circular structure supported the railway bringing coal to be loaded into waiting ships.

**J** 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.

**K** 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.

**L** 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 cycle way. Bear **R** on this path, then, after a few yards, **L** to go under the Metro. Turn **L** again and continue with the Metro on your **L** to reach a road.

**8** Turn **L**, pass back under the Metro line and follow this road **round** to cross the Spire Bridge. Stay on the left side. At the far end, turn **L** and take some steps down to a road. Cross and continue for a few more paces over grass to a cycle path. Turn **L**, pass under the Spire Bridge and continue on this path. Leave the cycle path at the first right turn and bear **R** on a path leading down to the river.

**9** Continue with the river on your **R** until the path bears **L** and rises to a side road. Turn **L** to a main road then **L** on the main road. Cross over, aiming for a bus stop. Take the steps that lead uphill to a cycle path. This is the C2C cycle path. Turn **R** and continue on the C2C cycle path, taking care to follow it when it turns sharp **R** down to a quiet road.

**10** Turn **L** and continue to pass through a traffic barrier then bear **R** down to the river. This path continues along the riverside for approximately 2 miles, passing landmarks such as the Limekilns, the old Coal Staithes, Wearmouth Bridge, and Sunderland Glass Centre. When the path veers away from the river to a road, look for some steps in a corner on the **R** leading back down to the river.

**11** Continue along the riverside path, round the marina and on to the sea front and Roker Pier.