

# VISITOR INFORMATION

## HADRIAN'S WALL

**Corbridge** itself has a very rich roman history, with a fantastic museum located in the town which can be accessed via a lovely riverside walk from The Angel.

**The best section of Hadrian's Wall** runs for around 16 miles between Chollerford and Greenhead. Within this section you will see some of the most famous views and attractions associated with Hadrian's Wall, including the Craggs leading to Steel Rigg, Housesteads Fort and Sycamore Gap.

**Housesteads Roman Fort** is the best preserved fort in the UK and is located on, in my opinion, the best section of the Wall. In this area you will get some of the most spectacular views, as well as a rich history and some of the most visible section of wall.

**Sycamore Gap** is one of the most photographed parts of the wall; many people recognise it from the film Robin Hood with Kevin Costner, others just admire the beauty and unique photo opportunity. Sycamore Gap is between Housesteads and Steel Rigg, which is a stunning walk of around 3.5 miles; it is fairly strenuous but well worth the effort.

**The AD122 bus** runs along the central section of the wall from Hexham throughout the summer months. You can therefore get to the central section by public transport from Corbridge, this also allows you to do longer linear walks along the wall and get the bus back to your car.

**Vindolanda** is a fantastic museum, where you can observe ongoing excavations during the summer months. They have some truly unique items on displays including roman writing tablets.

## DARK SKIES PARK

**Due to its pristine skies**, part of Northumberland was awarded gold tier designation by the International Dark Sky Association, making it officially the best place in England for people to go to enjoy the heavens. With 572 square miles of Northumberland having been named officially 'Dark Skies Park', it is Europe's biggest area of protected skies.

**80% of the UK population** have never seen The Milky Way, as it cannot be seen from many areas due to the light pollution.

**Where is it?** Well the nearest area from Corbridge is straight up the A68 north and along the B6318 to Chollerford... it starts around there. From this point it goes as far west as Gilsland then covers a huge area of Northumberland National Park going north around Kielder.

**The Observatory** at Kielder is a great place to visit as you will have access to the best equipment for stargazing and will be told what to look out for. This does need to be booked and it fills up very quickly.

**Don't worry if you can't get booked in ... just look up!** The glorious thing about the Dark Skies Park is that it is all around you. If you head up to anywhere around Bellingham, Kielder, Stonehaugh area, you are there. So pick a spot, lie in the grass and just look to the sky, you can't miss the stunning sights above you (weather permitting of course).

**Forgotten your picnic basket?** That's ok, we have them to borrow here. So pack up some sandwiches (we can make those for you too if you would like) and enjoy an evening of star gazing.

# NORTHUMBERLAND COAST

**Bamburgh** is one of the most famous sections of British coastline, with its imposing castle, huge expanse of beach and idyllic calm appearance. It will take just over an hour by car from Corbridge to get to Bamburgh, but it is well worth the journey. You can visit the beautiful Bamburgh Castle and enjoy the stunning beach.

**Alnwick Castle & Gardens** are great attractions to visit if you are heading up the coast. The Castle has grown in popularity with its links with Harry Potter, and they have some fantastic related events during holidays such as broomstick riding training. The garden just keeps on getting bigger and better, there is plenty to see and do for all ages, and the Treehouse is a perfect place to have an evening meal. Online tickets can be bought in advance to save money off your entry.

**Tynemouth**, although not in Northumberland, is a nearer section of coast which frequently wins awards for its cleanliness, beauty and popularity. Although busier than some of the secluded Northumberland beaches, it is stunning with attractions such as St Mary's Lighthouse and Tynemouth Priory which add a greater depth to it as a destination. It is an ideal place to take children, as it is safe with lifeguards during warmer months and also plenty to do including the Sealife Centre, Crazy Dino Golf, Leisure Lake with peddle and rowing boats, as well as plenty of places for ice cream and candy floss.

**Craster, Dunstanburgh & Druridge Bay** are beautiful and secluded places where you can always find somewhere peaceful to watch the sea. Whether it is a beautiful sunny day in July or a misty, wet day in September; these locations are atmospheric, welcoming and absolutely stunning. There is a lovely walk from Craster to Dunstanburgh Castle along the coastline which is well worth doing, and when you get back to Craster, the Jolly Fisherman pub offers great food (amazing fish and chips), along with fantastic sea views.

## PLACES TO VISIT

**Newcastle** is, I think, one of the most beautiful cities in the UK (if not the world). With its famous and simply outstanding Quayside and historic centre, it really does have something for everyone. The city prides itself on its arts and cultural scene with galleries and museums including Laing Art Gallery, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Sage Music Venue & the Biscuit Factory to name just a few. There has also been a lot of money spent on redevelopment of the East Quayside and Stephenson Quarters recently which celebrate the regions industrial past whilst bringing them to life with quirky music, food & hotel venues, such as Hoults Yard, Boiler Shop Steamer and Crowne Plaza Hotel. There is so much to do in Newcastle from shopping to sightseeing and boat trips to Football Stadium tours, so please do ask if you are heading that way and our staff will be more than happy to give you all their local knowledge.

**National Trust** have numerous attractions and properties in this area, so if you are a member make sure you make the most of it. Our nearest NT attraction is Housesteads Fort, which as I have mentioned, is a great place to visit. We also have the likes of Gibside which is a stunning house and gardens, just down the A1 south, as well as Wallington which is one of the biggest NT properties in the region... It is well worth a visit and it has absolutely stunning gardens. Craggside, near Rothbury, is a beautiful house which was the first to be lit using hydroelectric power; it has fantastic gardens especially when the Rhododendrons are out.

**English Heritage** also have various properties local to us, including the Corbridge Roman Town and Aydon Castle. Many of the sites along Hadrian's Wall are owned by English Heritage so if you are a member make sure you ask. Other local EH attractions include Belsay Hall and Gardens, Prudhoe Castle & Lindisfarne Priory (up the coast).

## WALKS

**Can you walk to Hexham along the river?** This may be one of the most commonly asked questions, the answer unfortunately not. However, if you head to the south side of the river bridge and turn right, you will get on to a path which takes you along the river for about ½ mile. When you reach the roadside (near Trees Please) there is a public footpath which takes you up in Park Wood and eventually back down in to Hexham. This is around 4 miles, but well worth the effort and you can always get the bus or train back from Hexham.

**Corbridge River** is a lovely place to have a gentle stroll. There are some steps on the north side of the river bridge that take you down to the riverside, if you head west from there you can follow the river along as far as Corbridge Roman Site, there are some seats along the way for picnics and a lovely grassy area for sunbathing. If you cross the river and head east, you can walk as far as Riding Mill, which again is a lovely river walk with a pub, The Wellington, for a pint at the other end; there is also a train station and buses that can bring you back to Corbridge.

**Aydon Castle** is an English Heritage property about 3-5 miles north of the village (depending on the route you take). There are a number of different paths you can take to walk up to the castle (the tourist information centre just around the corner has these maps to buy). The walks are lovely, but make sure you check the opening hours if you want to visit the site.

**Hadrian's Wall** is a perfect place to walk, not only can you take in some of the unspoilt Northumberland views, but you can combine that with the rich history that our region is so well known for. There is a public footpath which runs the full length of the wall, so you can walk as far as you like from any access point. Steel Rigg to Housesteads is a popular walk (or you can make this into a circular walk by combining it with Vindolanda), the Cawfields to Steel Rigg section is also very picturesque.

**Hareshaw Linn**, just outside of Bellingham, is a stunning walk through beautiful, enchanting woodland that leads to two lovely waterfalls. It is best seen the day after heavy rainfall as it is at its most impressive, but is well worth the walk anytime.

## CYCLING

**Route 72** cycle path literally passes the front door of The Angel. If you are doing the whole cycle path, we are the perfect place to stay overnight, or even just stop off for a pint and a cake on route.

**Store your bikes** inside if you are staying with us so they will be safe overnight. If you are eating here there are plenty of places to tie them up or we can store them in the Radcliffe across the road if you are staying a bit longer,

**Borrow a bike (& a helmet)...** One thing about holidaying in the UK is that you have to pack for all sorts of eventualities, we just never know what will crop up or what the weather will be doing. Well if you arrive at The Angel and decide to take in a section of this beautiful cycle route, then we have two adult's bikes that you can borrow, as well as helmets and repair kit.

**Children friendly cycling** is always hard to find, you want something that will keep them entertained and also where they can go ahead without you worrying; we have some great options whether you want something fairly local or if you are prepared to go further afield. If you head along to Prudhoe (about 10 minutes east) and park by the train station (or indeed get the train along), there is a large section of off road cycle path. You can go to Wylam without being on any roads, or if you start at Wylam Car Park, you can go as far as Newburn (just before Newcastle)

without going on the road. There is also the dam at Derwent Reservoir (just off the A68 south, around 10 miles from here), this is a smaller bike ride but they are safe from traffic across the dam and are in view for the whole length. If you would like to go further afield or have older children/teens; Kielder is perfect as they have cycle routes the full way around the reservoir, each one is rated due to difficulty so perfect for any levels.

## SPORTS & LEISURE

**Fishing** in Northumberland is a well-loved pass time and we have numerous local places that our guests can go to spend some quiet time fishing. If you have forgotten your rod, you can borrow one from us (you will need a licence). Permits for the River Tyne in Hexham can be purchased from the Tourist Information Centre in Hexham. There are also plenty of other places to fish including Derwent Reservoir.

**Watching the salmon jump** at Tyne Green Hexham is great way to spend an hour just relaxing whilst taking some impressive photos. Under the road bridge there is a weir which has been specially constructed to help maximise their chance of making it up there, so you will see them jumping their way up the 'steps' on their journey upstream.

**Activities** such as paintballing, zorbing and quad biking are available at Slaley Hall hotel just 6 miles south of Corbridge. There is also a Go Ape centre around 6 miles north, at Matfen. Then if you go further afield you have numerous activities up at Kielder.

**Horse riding** is a great activity for all of the family, and in the scenery of Northumberland what could be nicer. Pony trekking and horse riding is available at Cragside Stables at Bardon Mill, which will only take around 20 minutes to get to or Sinderhope, just outside of Allendale (around 30 minutes).

**There are plenty of swimming pools** in our area to choose from, all offering something different. The closest swimming pools are at Wentworth Leisure Centre in Hexham and Prudhoe Waterworld, Prudhoe. Prudhoe has flumes and a shallow children's area with a wave machines whereas Wentworth is a better pool for swimming, although it does have a children pool and has activity hours with inflatables etc. Haltwhistle, which is only about 20 miles away, has a fantastic outdoor pool with grassy area for the parents to enjoy the sun while they watch the children play, it has a flume as well as inflatable hours at weekends and during holidays. Just outside of Haltwhistle, there is also a great place called Glendale, which has a swimming pool which you can privately hire (and doesn't cost a fortune). Matfen and Slaley Hall hotels also have swimming pools and spa facilities which are great for pamper days. For the most adventurous and to keep the teens entertained, there is a waterpark called Wet 'n' Wild situated at North Shields... a bit further afield but something a bit different, with various slides, flumes, lazy river and waves.

**We also have gyms galore.** In Hexham, there is Wentworth Leisure Centre and No Limits gyms; we then also have Prudhoe Waterworld gym as well as Slaley Hall and Matfen Hall Hotel. It is best to book in advance as some gyms may require you to have an induction before using their machines, so worth checking this first and whether they have space to book you in.