

River Tees
Rediscovered 

HERITAGE TRAILS GUIDE

Explore the natural
and built heritage
of the Tees Valley



THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF THE TEES VALLEY

The River Tees is barely wider than a jump from one bank to the other at its source. Yet in less than 30 miles it widens, maturing and meandering, through the lowlands between Darlington and the North Sea. The river and its surrounding landscape provide a varied natural habitat for a wide variety of animals and plant life.

Rural farmland and woodland

The open countryside around Darlington and to the west of Stockton-on-Tees has rich alluvial soils and so is largely farmed, mainly for crops, but some pastures too. Wildlife benefits from a good network of hedgerows between fields and alongside country lanes. Broad and mixed leaf woodland is found in places on the steep-sided banks of the River Tees.

Hedges, small woodlands and rough pastures are important for a number of bird species which are declining across the UK. These include yellow-hammer, cuckoo, green woodpecker and bullfinch.

Ancient and semi-natural woodland survives along the banks of the River Tees and its tributaries, especially the steep Leven valley. Woodland is generally restricted to the steeper slopes which have no value for agriculture. Ancient woodland is a precious habitat. It is scarce, irreplaceable and supports

a vast diversity of wildlife including many rare and declining species.

To be classified as ancient, woodland must have been present since 1600. Before that, planting was uncommon so these woodlands can be assumed to date back to the ice age.



Urban wildlife

The major towns of the Tees Valley are inevitably the sites where most changes have taken place that affect the natural landscape.

Remnant habitats, such as small meadows and woodlands, survived agricultural improvement only to be surrounded by the spread of housing. There are ponds which were created as

a result of human activity; old brick pits, gravel quarries and even fire-ponds for a small airfield support toads, frogs and sometimes the nationally protected great crested newt.

Other abandoned industrial sites support an open mosaic of grassland where wildflowers persist. Elsewhere, dense scrub proliferates with deep thickets of hawthorn, blackthorn and dog rose.

The river

The waters of the Tees are rich in wildlife. Salmon is distributed throughout the river, while the numbers of brown trout have declined, as a result of the degraded and fragmented habitat. Brook lamprey can be found in the Rivers Leven and Tees.





Otters are spotted with remarkable regularity along the Tees throughout Stockton and around the North Tees marshes.

Roe deer are not often thought of as a urban mammals yet are regular visitors to woodlands and pastures on the edge of towns in the Tees Valley.



Bowesfield and Preston Farm

Three large reed-filled pools create a sizeable undisturbed wetland that supports a number of ducks and wading birds such as teal, curlew, gadwall, ruff and golden plover. This is also an excellent place to spot dragonflies and damselflies.

Coatham Marsh

A series of pools and reed swamps, this is the last remaining wildlife habitat to have survived the almost entire urban reclamation of the south Tees. Bordered by Redcar's blast furnace, the site is sanctuary for more than 200 species of wild birds and

wildflowers as well as mammals such as fox and stoats. Smaller mammals must also be present as the site is regularly visited by birds of prey including barn owls.

Maze Park

Visitors can climb one of its landscaped mounds to enjoy panoramic views of the conurbation. Glades and open grassland attract scarce butterfly species such as grayling and speckled wood. The steep banks provide nesting for sand martins and give excellent views of common and grey seals preying on salmon negotiating the Tees Barrage.

Portrack Marsh

This wetland nature reserve attracts hundreds of birds each year and is home to a wide variety of mammals, amphibians and insects.

Winter sees redshank and lapwing, shoveler, pochard, tufted duck and teal frequenting the pools. While kingfisher and grey wagtail are easy to spot.

Spring is the time for wheatear, whinchat and warblers. And Summer little grebe, moorhen, swans and Canada goose. By late summer, the exposed mud flats are home to waders such as dunlin, black tailed godwit, greenshank and ruff.



Saltholme

A flagship site for the RSPB, Saltholme's wetlands are home to large numbers of wildfowl and wading birds. In the spring and summer many birds breed here including shoveler and gadwall and common terns. The reed beds are home to water rails, reed bunting and reed warblers.



Seaton Common, Seaton Sands and North Gare

Among the relics of a once thriving salt industry lies a network of ditches and wet grassland that attracts vast numbers of over-wintering migrating birds.



South Gare and Coatham Sands

Fresh water marshes, lagoons, dunes and golden sandy beaches are designated as internationally important for wild birds. Species such as bar-tailed godwit, curlew, redshank and grey plover make their winter homes here. While the dune slacks support large stands of northern marsh and fragrant orchids.

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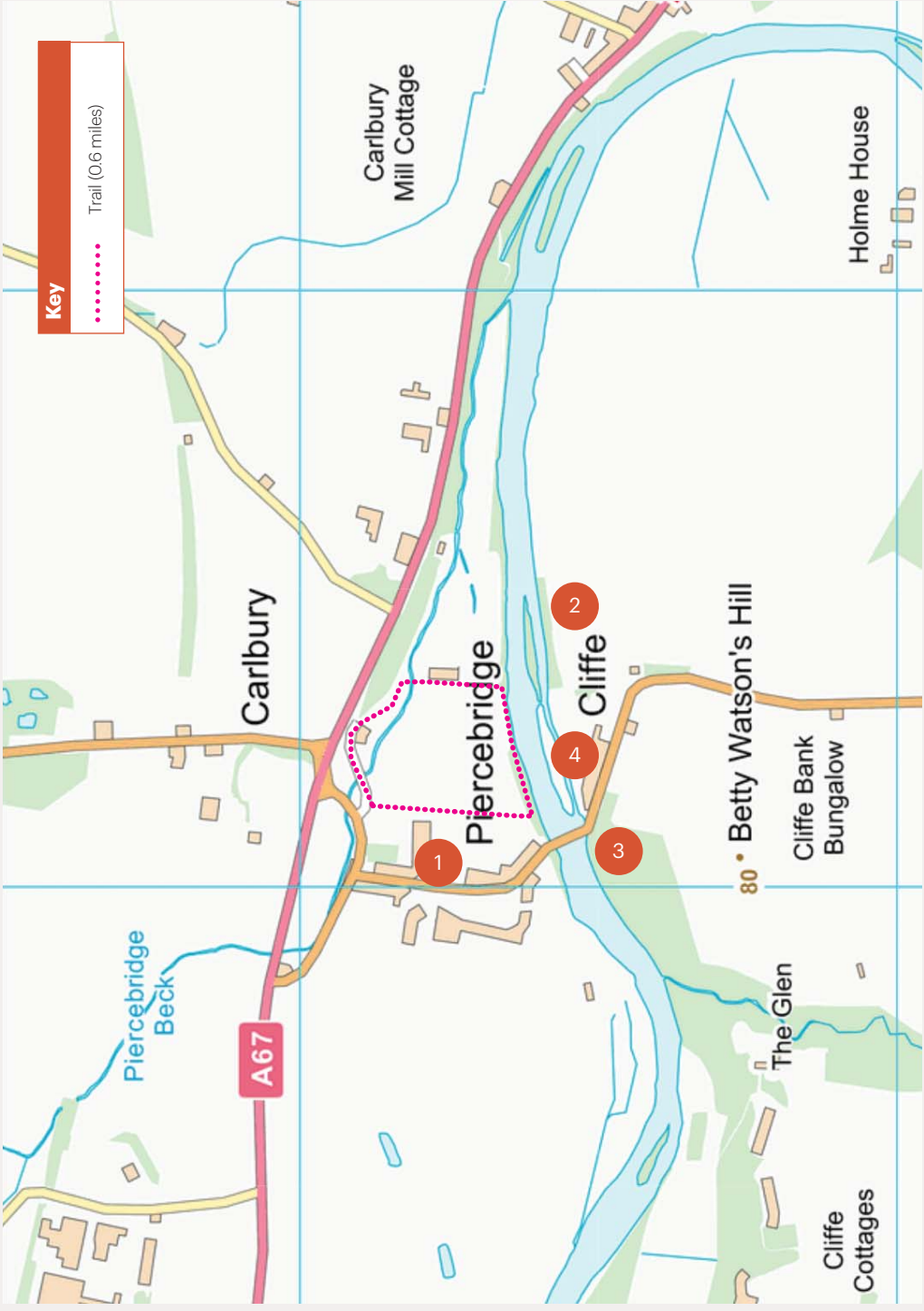
INTRODUCTION

Darlington is a large market town in County Durham. With a population of just over 100,000 the town lies on the River Skerne, a tributary of the River Tees. It owes much of its development to the growth of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, the world's first steam locomotive powered permanent passenger railway.

During the early 19th Century, powerful Quakers such as the Pease and Backhouse families were prominent employers and philanthropists in the area. Darlington is known for its association with the birth of the modern railway. On 27 September 1825 George Stephenson's engine Locomotion No. 1 ushered in the modern railway age when it travelled between Shildon and Stockton-on-Tees via Darlington, on the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The town later became an important centre for manufacturing. Darlington has also long been a centre for engineering, particularly bridge building. Bridges built in Darlington are found as far away as the River Nile and the River Amazon!

Darlington has over 300km of public rights of way, ten local nature reserves, seven formal parks, three community woodlands and numerous other open spaces to explore.

The trails in this guide take in lesser-known rural communities and natural features in and around Darlington that have contributed to the area's historical and industrial past. From pretty Piercebridge and its Roman significance to the industrial architecture of the Tees Cottage Pumping Station. With Sites of Special Scientific Interest and famous literary connections - Darlington and its environs have them all.



PIERCEBRIDGE CIRCULAR

1

Piercebridge is a picture-postcard village of pretty Georgian and Victorian cottages, a village green skirted by ancient trees and a river home to trout and grayling.



▲ The bridge at Piercebridge



▲ Piercebridge Roman Bridge

The current bridge dates back to 1789 – its three handsome spans dressed with Ashlar sandstone. However, its historical significance reaches far back into the mists of time when a foreign power occupied our islands.

Highlights

Piercebridge is perhaps best known for its strategic importance as a river crossing during the Roman occupation. Until the 5th Century, it was sited where the York-Newstead Roman road known as Dere Street crosses the River Tees.

1. Today you'll see the Roman legacy in the form of an **excavated fort** and the site of the original **Roman bridge** – both open to the public (2).

3. Piercebridge also played a part in the Civil War; Piercebridge Battle was partly fought on the bridge, when on 1 December 1642 a small Royalist contingent including William Cavendish defended it against Parliamentarians led by Lord Fairfax.

Did you know?

4. A clock in the **George Hotel** inspired Henry Clay Works' 1876 song "My Grandfather's Clock". The clock was said to have been owned by two brothers named Jenkins. When one brother died, the clock began losing time, and it stopped forever upon the death of the other.

Distance

0.6 miles

Estimated walk time

35 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Corner of Tofts Field near Bridge

Route information

A short walk around Tofts Field.

Parking – There is free parking available in the car park of the George Hotel.

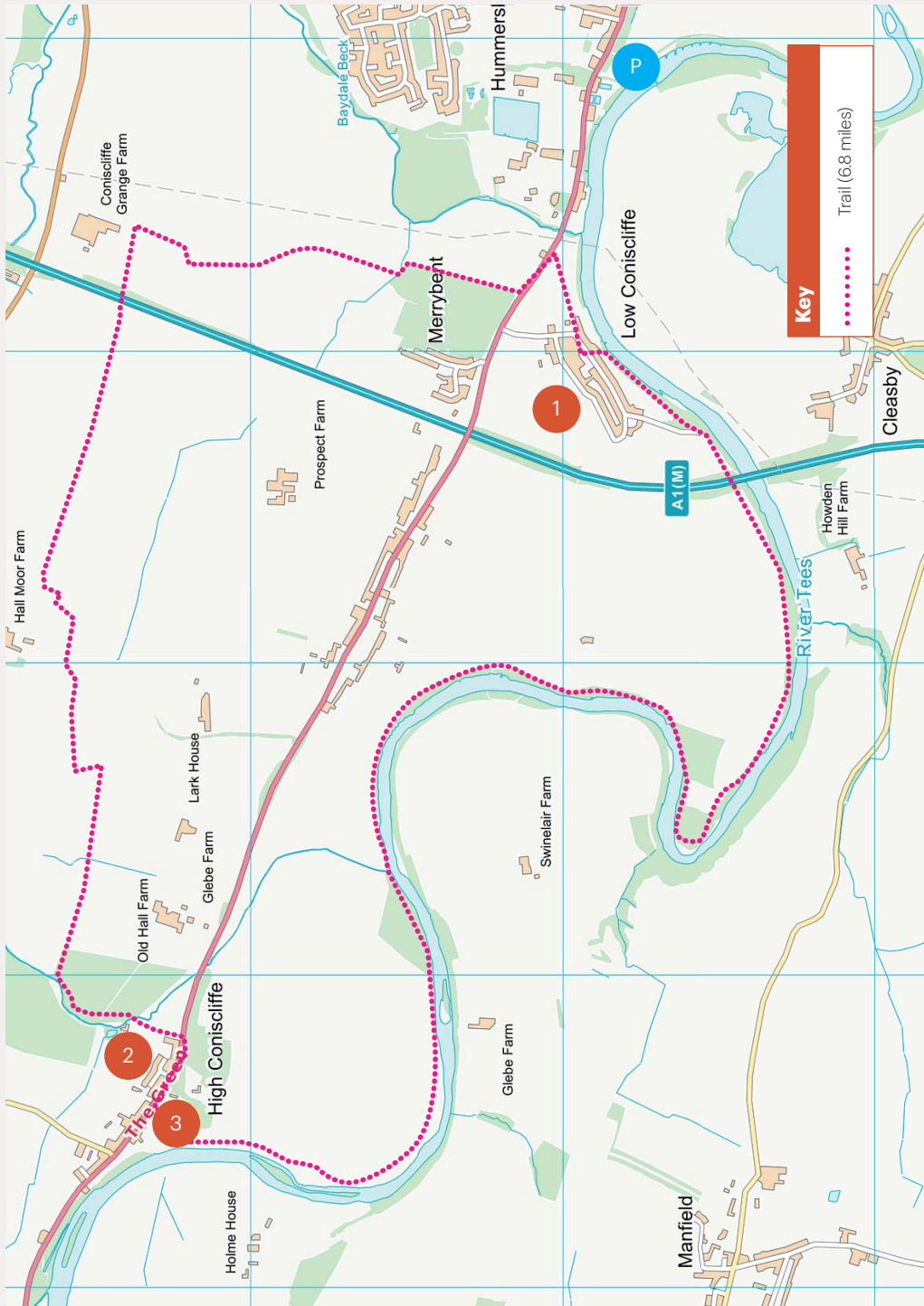
Facilities – There are no public toilets in Piercebridge. The George Hotel and the farm shop and café at Piercebridge Organics both offer food and drink.

Dogs – Dogs on leads are welcome.

Surfaces – A mixture of grass and footpaths. Includes stiles and gates.

WILDLIFE WATCH ROE DEER





LOW CONISCLIFFE TO HIGH CONISCLIFFE CIRCULAR

2

Following the route of the River Tees as it meanders through picturesque countryside. Discover historic villages, a Norman church and the site of the execution of the 8th Century King of Northumbria.



▲ High Coniscliffe



▲ St. Edwin's Church

Highlights

1. Low Coniscliffe is a village three miles (4.8 km) west of Darlington with a population at the 2011 Census of 716.

The village dates back to Saxon times and the name is thought to come from Old English and Old Norse, meaning 'Kings Cliff'.

This is thought to have been a particularly bloody place in Viking England with the king of Northumbria and several nobles murdered here during the 8th Century.

2. High Coniscliffe is a village approximately four miles (6.4 km) west of Darlington. At the 2011 Census the population of this civil parish was 242. It is now a linear village, with most houses along the north side of the A67, also has a

village green and church on the south side of the road.

3. St. Edwin's Church is Norman and dates from 1170 and is dedicated to Edwin, King of Northumbria who later declared himself king of all England and converted to Christianity in 627. The Church and the vicarage are on the edge of a limestone ridge that is said to contain secret passages.

Did you know?

The 'Spotted Dog' pub in the village is named after a foxhound, called Blue Cap, who won a race at Newmarket with a wager of 500 guineas in 1792.

Distance
6.8 miles

Estimated walk time
2 hours 50 minutes

Suggested start/finish
Lay-by at Baydale Beck pub

Route information

Parking – There is free parking available at the nearby Broken Scar Picnic Area.

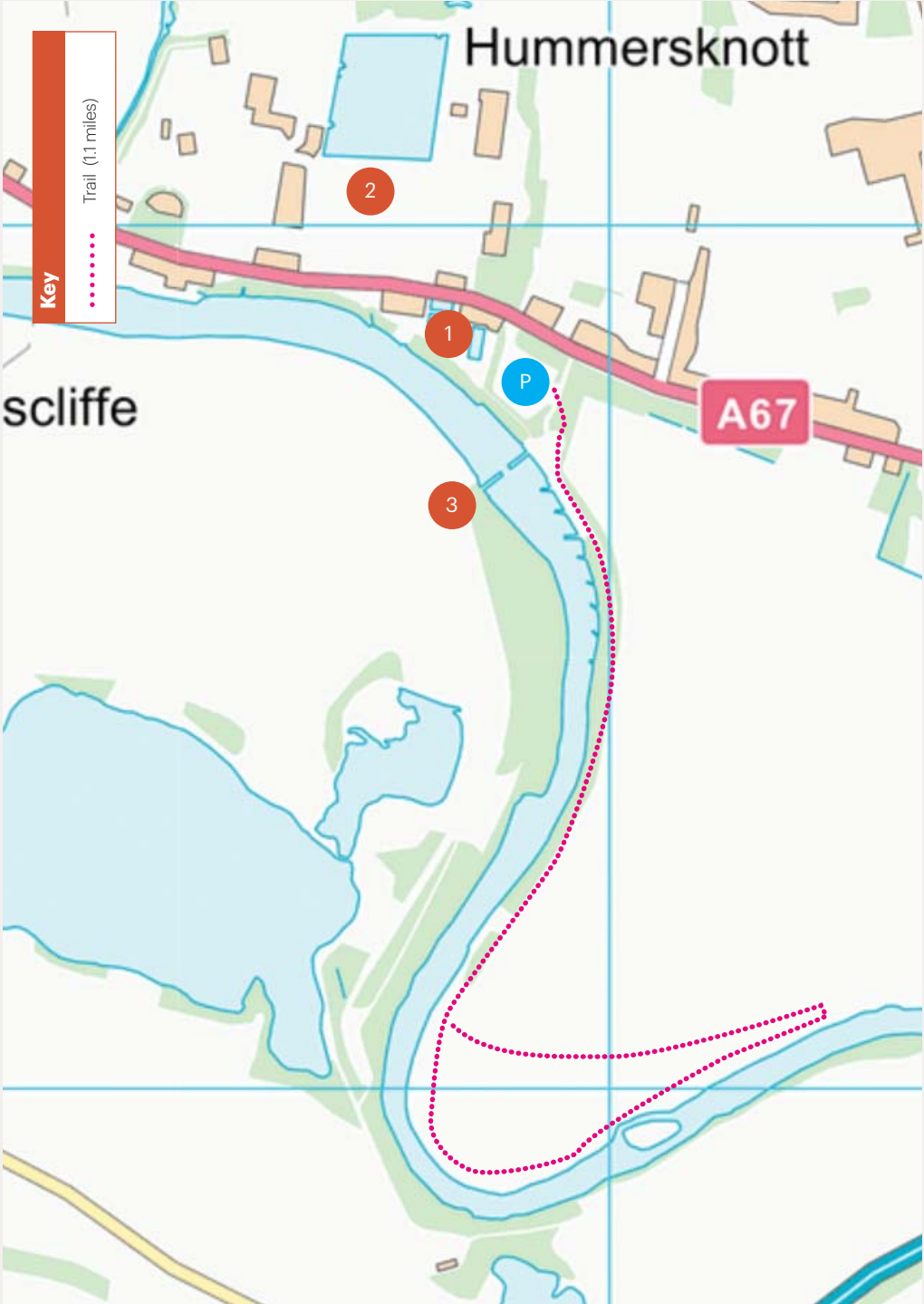
Facilities – There are no public toilets in Low Coniscliffe or High Coniscliffe. The Spotted Dog Pub in High Coniscliffe offers food and drink. The Baydale Beck pub on the A67 near Low Coniscliffe offers food and drink.

Surfaces – A mixture of grass and footpaths. Includes stiles and gates.

▼ Baydale Beck, Low Coniscliffe



Hummersknott



Key

Trail (1.1 miles)

.....

BROKEN SCAR CIRCULAR

3

Taking in manmade legacies of the Darlington area: Broken Scar Weir and Tees Cottage Pumping Station. Explore this scenic and historically important area.



▲ Tees Cottage Pumping Station



▲ Broken Scar Weir

Highlights

1. Built in 1849, **Tees Cottage Pumping Station** is a Victorian waterworks, originally owned by Darlington Gas and Water Company. It began supplying water to Darlington and the surrounding areas from 1850. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument with two completely original pumping engines in full working order.

The engines are housed in their own purpose-built buildings, dating from 1847 to 1901, that are superb examples of Victorian architecture. The engines and buildings are carefully maintained, preserved and run by volunteers, supported by the site owner, Northumbrian Water.

2. **Broken Scar** is one of Northumbrian Water's principal water treatment works, serving the population of Teesside and East Cleveland. The works has a nominal capacity of 180 million litres per day and abstracts water from the River Tees.

3. **Broken Scar Weir** is an important piece of local infrastructure. Built to control the flow of the river and to ensure a constant level upstream where water is extracted. The area is now a much-loved picnic spot.

Distance

1.1 miles

Estimated walk time

25 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Broken Scar Picnic Area

Route Information

The Pumping Station is open to the public on five week-ends a year. For more information, visit www.teescottage.co.uk

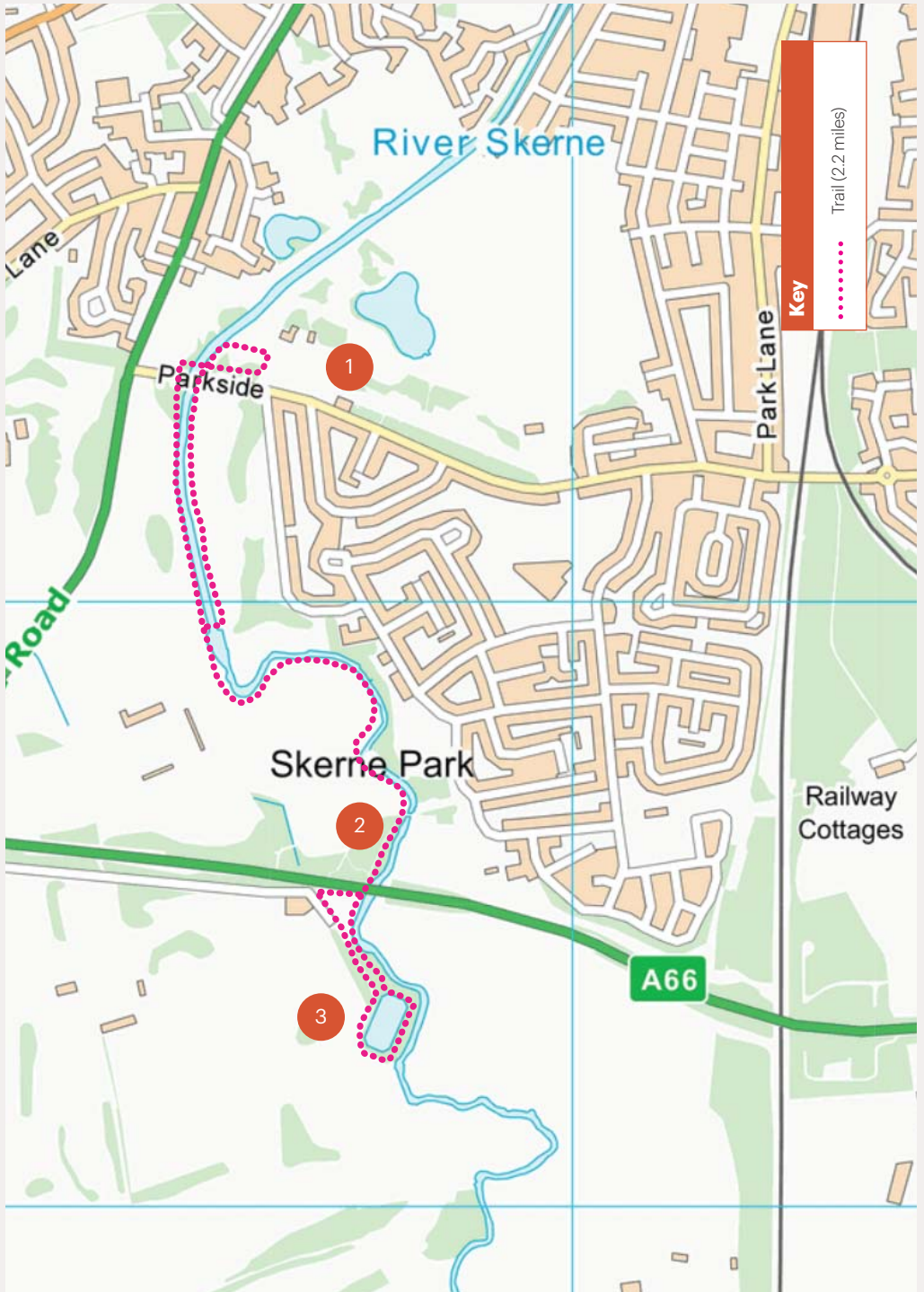
Parking – There is free parking available at the Broken Scar Picnic Area.

Surfaces – A mixture of grass and footpaths. Includes stile and gate.

Facilities – There is a children's playground at Broken Scar Picnic Area.

WILDLIFE WATCH DIPPER





SOUTH PARK, SNIPE POND CIRCULAR

4

On the urban fringe separating town and country explore South Park – a magnificent Victorian municipal park and Snipe Pond. A locally important fishing site and a good place to spot kingfishers and moorhens.



▲ South Park



▲ Bridge over the Skerne

Highlights

1. **South Park.** In his will, dated 1636, Sir James Bellases left a 10-hectare copyhold farm, Poor Howden's Farm, to the town for charitable purposes. In March 1850, the trustees of the charity recommended that the greater part of the farm 'be used as a park or promenade and a recreation ground for the public at large'. The park, named Bellases Park was opened two years later. It subsequently became known as People's Park and then finally, South Park and was the first recreational park in the north of England.

At 26 hectares (891 acres), today this Grade II listed park is more attractive than ever – hosting regular events and is home to a lake, bandstand, skateboard park, games area,

education centre, café, sensory gardens and a famous aviary – once the home of Max the foul-mouthed parrot!

2. The riverside path along the Skerne to Snipe Pond is a good place to spot kingfishers and moorhens.

3. In a previous life, **Snipe Pond** was part of a Victorian sewage treatment works, acting as a settlement pond. Today it is a locally important fishing site and thanks to the unflinching efforts of the Friends of Snipe Pond community group, you can enjoy wildflower meadows, a pocket park and improved paths.

Distance

2.2 miles

Estimated walk time

50 minutes

Suggested start/finish

South Park

Route Information

Parking – There is on-street car parking around South Park.

Bus – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

Train – A short walk from the Darlington station, down Victoria Road towards the town centre and along Victoria Embankment towards South Park.

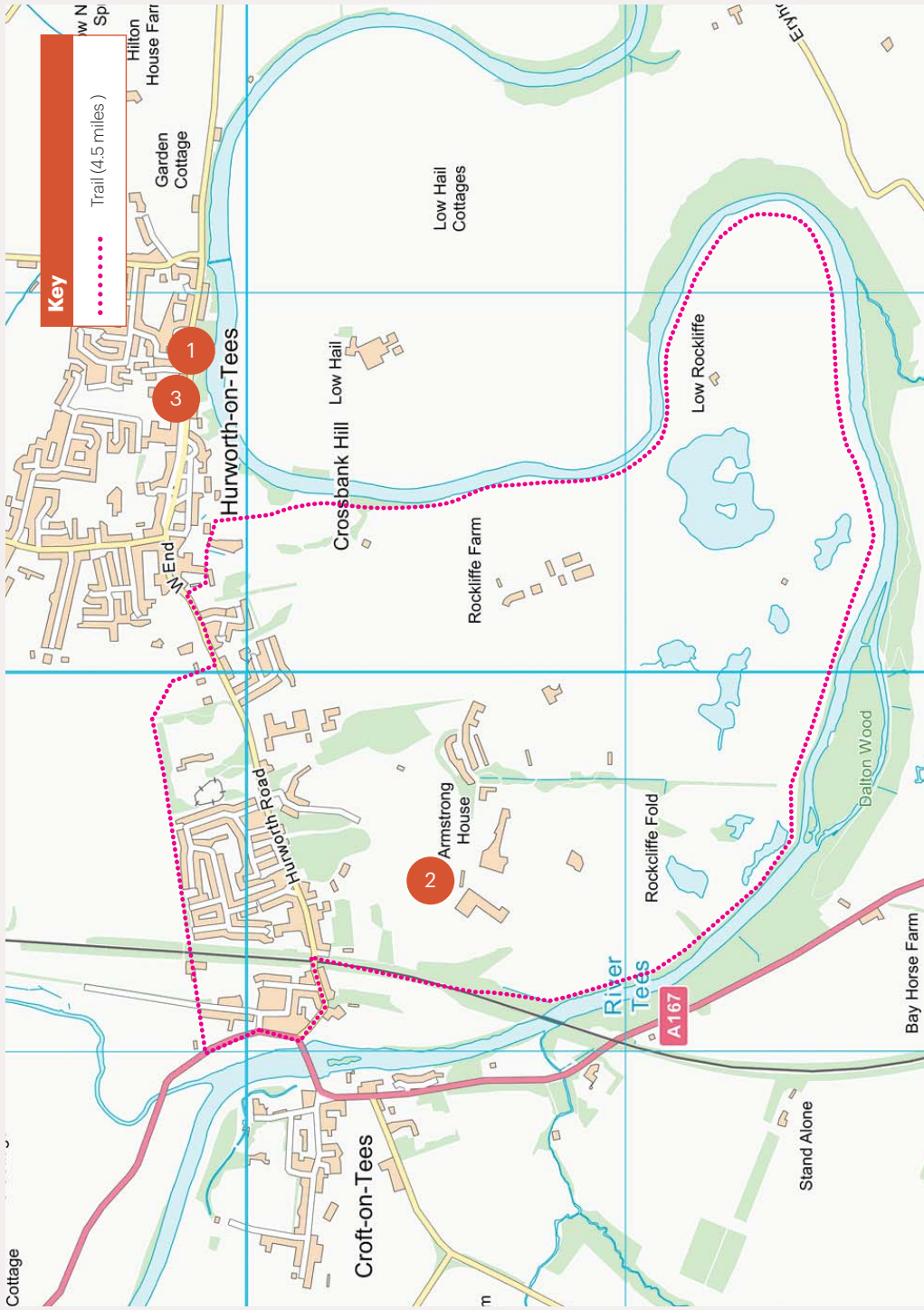
Toilets – in the park

Facilities – The South Park Café offers hot and cold drinks, snacks and ice cream.

Surfaces – A mixture of grass and footpaths.

▼ Snipe Pond





HURWORTH, ROCKLIFFE CIRCULAR

5

Through farmland, along the banks of the River and past a golf course. This trail passes a 12th Century church, a grand stately home and the birthplace of a renowned mathematician!



▲ Rockliffe Hall



▲ All Saints Church

Highlights

1. **Hurworth Green** is the location of a major plague burial site from the Great Plague of 1665. The majority of the village population was wiped out by the disease and are buried here. Bodies were brought for burial from nearby villages along Knelgate, the narrow path leading from the river to the Green.

2. Dating back to 1774, by 1851 **Rockliffe Hall** was owned by Robert Backhouse who began major developments, including landscaping of the gardens. In the intervening years it changed hands a number of times and currently accommodates Middlesbrough Football Club training ground. The hall is a 5-star hotel with an international standard golf course.

Born in the village in 1701 William Emerson became a mathematician of some repute and wrote a number of influential books on mathematics, geometry, navigation and optics. His tomb is in the churchyard.

3. There has been a church on the site of **All Saints Church** since the 12th Century. The present church was built in 1832 and incorporates the tower base and two pillars from the original building.

In the 19th Century, the village was a major centre for linen weaving employing up to 120 weavers. The waters of the River Tees and Skerne were noted for the excellence of their bleaching properties.

Distance
4.5 miles

Estimated walk time
1 hour 30 minutes

Suggested start/finish
Hurworth-on-Tees

Route Information

Parking – There is limited on-street car parking in Hurworth and nearby Croft-on-Tees.

Facilities – Hurworth has various cafés, restaurant and pubs offering food and drink.

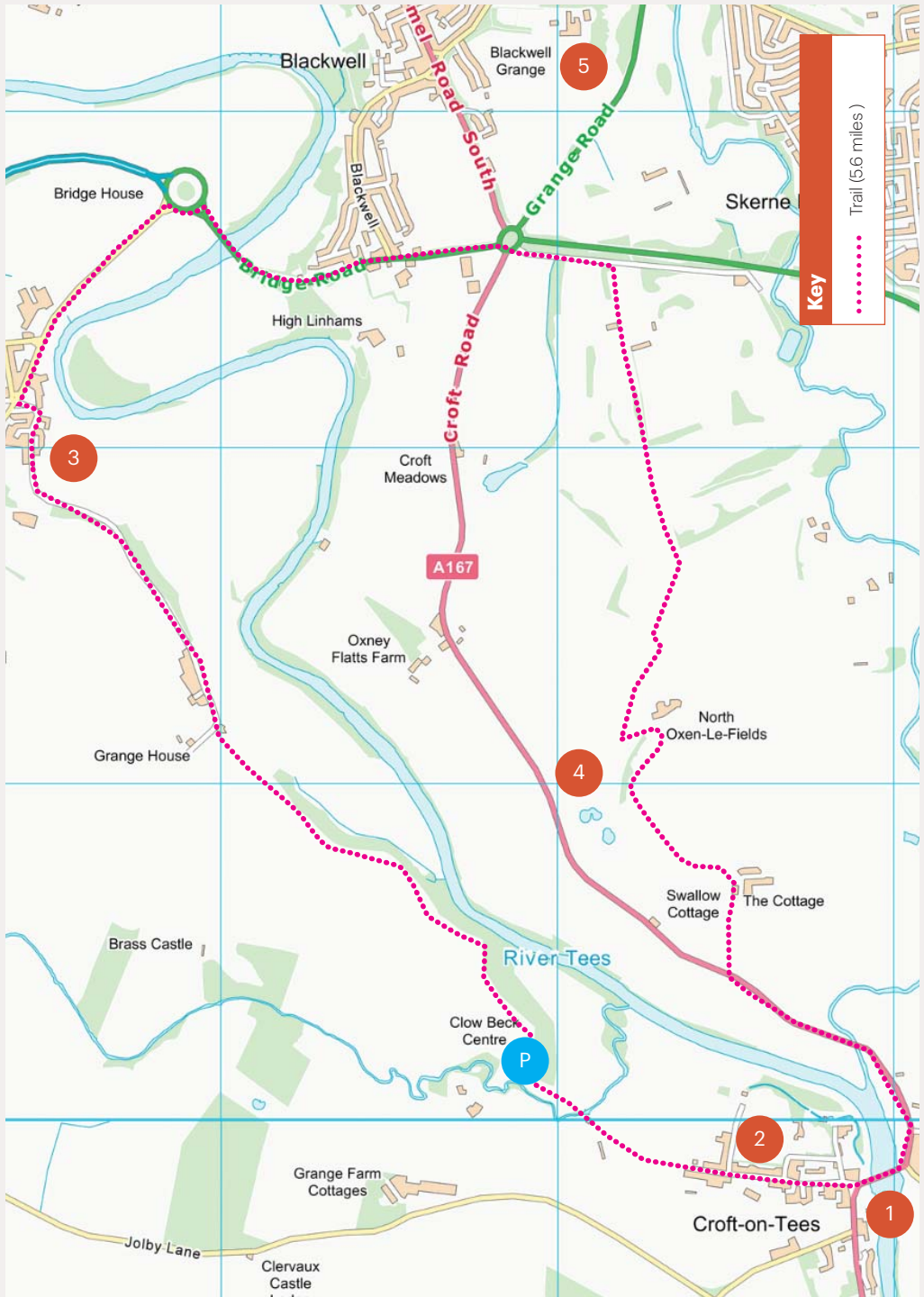
Surfaces – a mix of footpaths and grass. Includes stiles and gates.

▼ Hurworth Green



WILDLIFE WATCH
OTTER





HURWORTH, CROFT AND STAPLETON CIRCULAR

6

Another trail that takes in Hurworth (see Trail 4) as well as literary connections with 'Alice in Wonderland', a bridge with a story and an attractive Grade II listed house and estate.



▲ Croft Bridge



▲ Hell Kettles

Highlights

1. **Croft Bridge** was built in the 15th Century to replace a previous timber bridge washed away by floods in 1356. It is the first point a new Bishop of Durham crosses into his diocese and is the scene of an entrance ceremony for the Bishop.

2. Author of 'Alice in Wonderland', Lewis Carroll's (née Charles Dodgson) father was rector of **Croft Church** and both his mother and father are buried in the churchyard.

3. **Stapleton** village and surrounding area were granted by William the Conqueror to a knight known as Benedict de Stapleton. During the medieval period, a bridge linked the village to the northern bank of the river. It was lost after a flood

and was not replaced, meaning that the nearest crossing was at Croft-on-Tees until 1833 when the Blackwell bridge was built.

4. A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) **Hell Kettles** is the only place in Durham where there is a body of water fed by springs. There are various legends associated with Hell Kettles, including the possibility of it being the inspiration the scene in 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' where she falls down a rabbit hole.

5. **Blackwell Grange** is an early 18th Century country house built in about 1710 for George Allan, a wealthy industrialist. After passing through the care of various family members, today this Grade II listed building is a hotel.

Distance

5.6 miles

Estimated walk time

2 hours 35 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Croft, Stapleton or Blackwell

Route Information

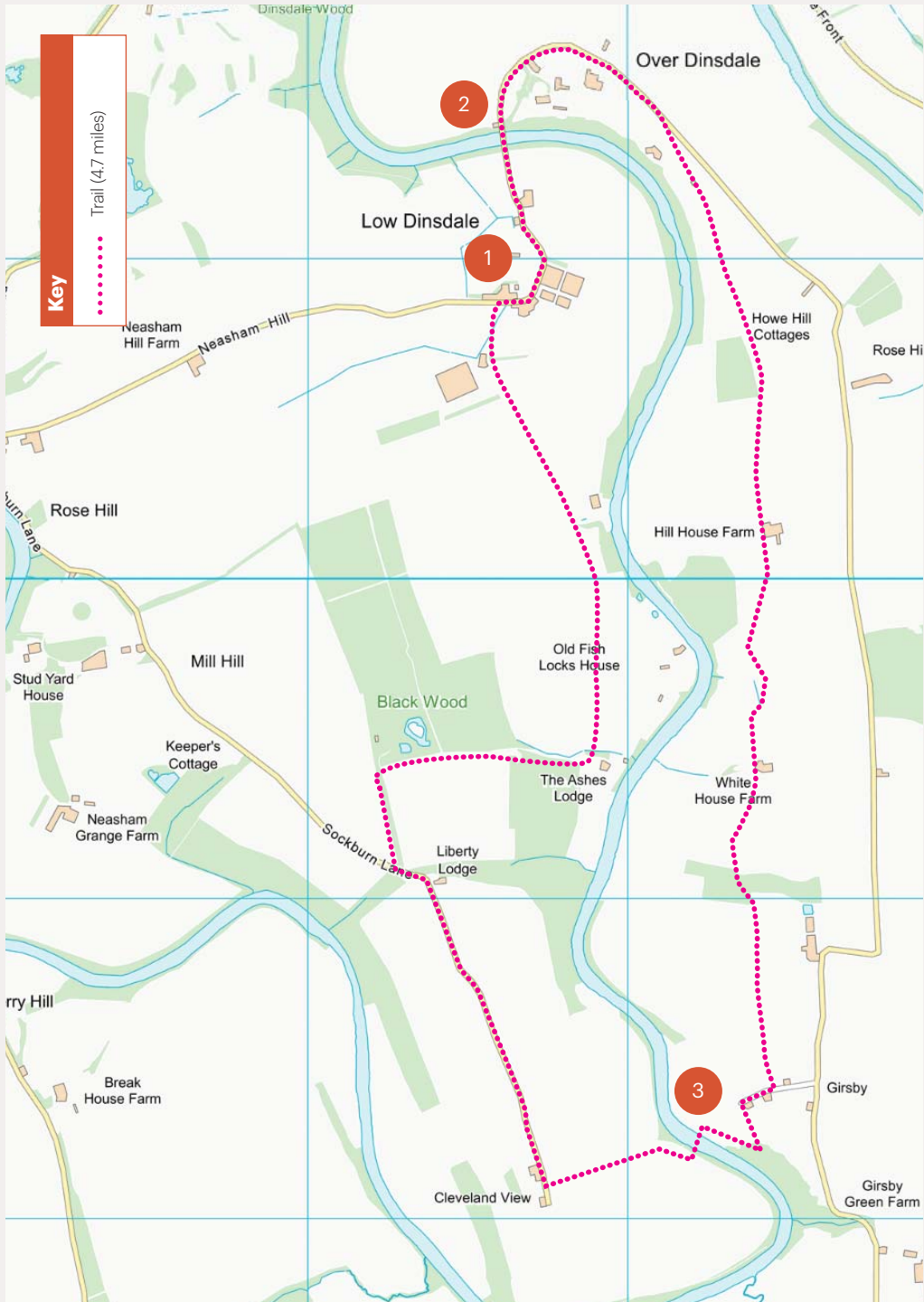
Parking – There is limited on-street car parking in and around Blackwell and Croft-on-Tees, as well as a car park at Clow Beck.

Facilities – Blackwell Village and Croft-on-Tees have a range of cafés, restaurants, hotels and pubs offering food and drink as does the The Bridge Inn in Stapleton.

Surfaces – a mix of footpaths and grass. Includes gates.

▼ Stapleton





LOW DINSDALE, GIRSBY, SOCKBURN CIRCULAR

7

A scenic rural and woodland circular trail starting from attractive and notable rural community.



▲ Girsby Bridge



▲ St. John The Baptist Church

Highlights

1. Low Dinsdale – The site of St. John the Baptist Church is possibly 12/13th Century, although the present building is 19th Century.

Low Dinsdale Manor is partially medieval and is within a complex of earthworks. The manor was originally a fortified settlement owned by the Siward family, who later changed their name to Surtees (sur tees – ‘on the Tees’). The current house was built in 1536 and has been added to at various dates. The bridge over the dried out moat has the carved crest of the Surtees family on it. Later members of the family include Bessie Surtees who eloped with a future Lord Chancellor and Robert Surtees, the famous county historian, who also lived at Rockliffe Hall.

2. Low Dinsdale Bridge is the third one, replacing a previous bridge first built by Rev. WS Temple to allow workers from the Surtees Estate to cross the Tees to the church.

3. Girsby Bridge was provided in 1870 by Theophania Blackett, widow of Sir William, of Sockburn Hall to give access to St. John the Baptist Church.

Sockburn Hall, located south of Girsby Green Farm was built in 1834 by Sir William Collingwood Blackett, replacing the previous ruined Conyers Hall. An ancestor of the Conyers family is supposed to have rid the district of the Sockburn Worm, a “dragon or fiery flying serpent” that was terrorising the local area. The Conyers Falchion is used in the ceremony to welcome the new Bishop of Durham.

Distance

4.7 miles

Estimated walk time

1 hour 40 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Low Dinsdale

Route Information

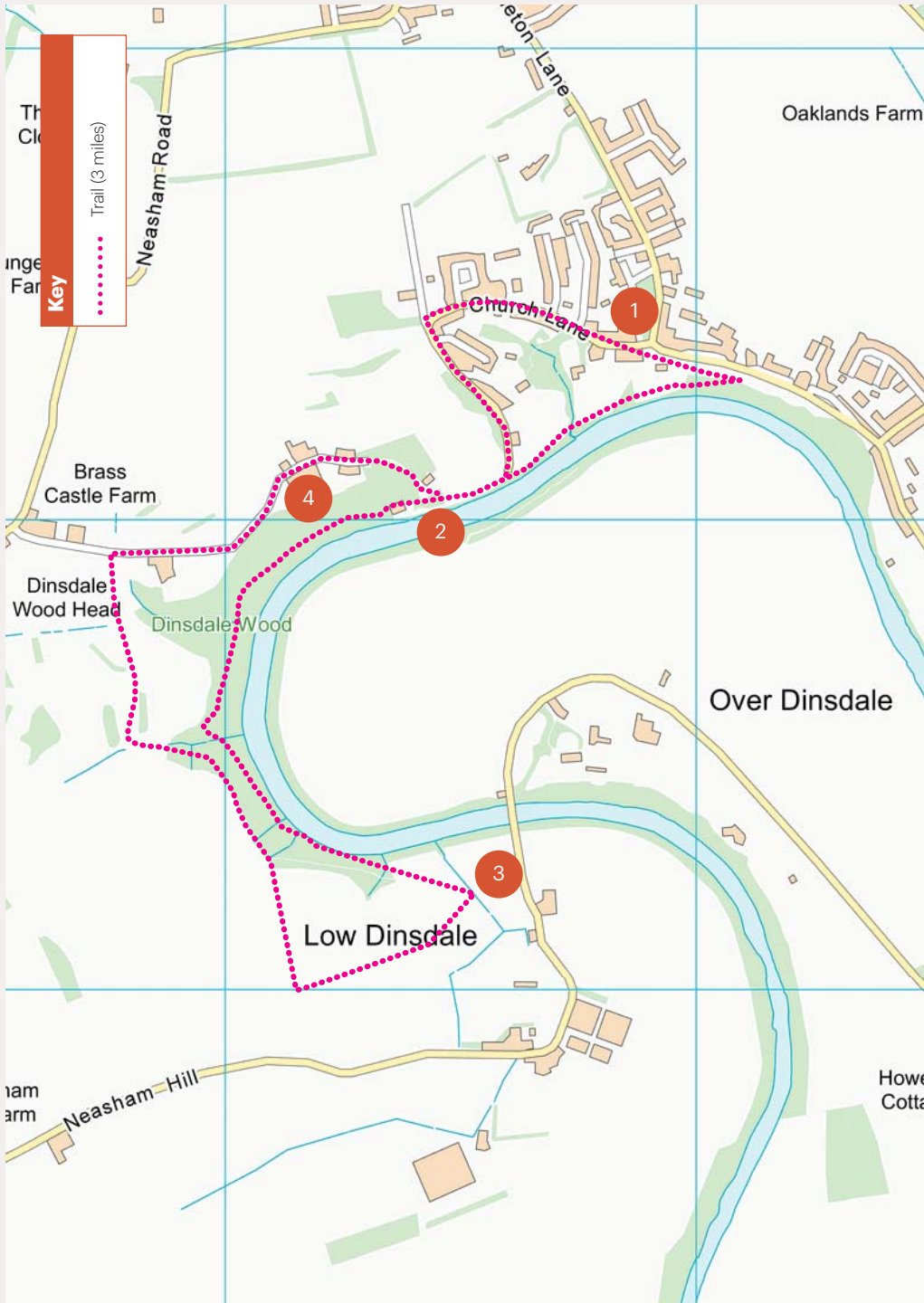
Parking – There is limited on-street car parking in Low Dinsdale.

Surfaces – a mix of footpaths, road, dirt roads and grass. Includes stiles and gates.

Dogs – Dogs on leads are welcome.

▼ River walk to Low Dinsdale





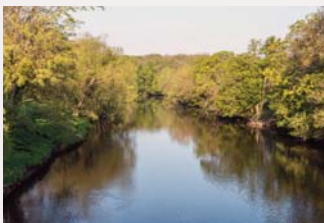
MIDDLETON ONE ROW, LOW DINSDALE CIRCULAR

8

A scenic riverside walk that takes in two historic listed buildings, the remains of a Norman castle and a Victorian spa.



▲ Middleton One Row



▲ Low Dinsdale

Highlights

1. The route from St Laurence Church passes **Castle Hill** (reportedly the oldest house in Middleton One Row and the 17th Century manor house of the Royalist Ayscough family) and opposite is the Friary, said to have been bought by George Stephenson for his two sisters to live in. The road continues down passing Tower Hill Motte and Bailey castle before arriving near the site of 'Pont Teys' (or Bridge on the Tees), the crossing point on the Roman supply road north from York.

2. Following the route up river brings you to **Dinsdale Spa**. In 1789 labourers employed by Sir John Lambton discovered a spa spring whilst drilling for coal. The spring was said to have 'burst forth accompanied with a tremendous smoke and sulphurous stench!' The

supposed curative powers of the waters prompted visitors from a wide area.

3. The riverside walk through the woods and then across fields to Low Dinsdale arrives at the 12th Century church of **St. John the Baptist** before turning back past the old manor house which is surrounded by much older moat earthworks and entrenchments.

4. The walk along the edge of the wood cuts across the golf course and meets the imposing gates and building which was the 70 room Dinsdale Spa Hotel (now Dinsdale Park). Built in 1829 to serve the increasing number of visitors delivered by the new railway to Fighting Cocks Station in Middleton St. George and a daily stage coach from Newcastle.

Distance

3 miles

Estimated walk time

1 hour

Suggested start/finish

Middleton One Row or
Low Dinsdale

Route Information

Parking – There is limited on-street car parking in Middleton One Row and Low Dinsdale.

Surfaces – a mix of footpaths, road, dirt roads and grass. Includes stiles and gates.

Dogs – Dogs on leads are welcome.

WILDLIFE WATCH WATER VOLE



STOCKTON-ON-TEES TRAILS



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INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Stockton-on-Tees owes much of its development to the River Tees.

In the early 13th Century, Yarm was the most prosperous port on the river. Sailing ships brought wine and flax to the town and sheepskins for the tanneries along the river banks. On the return journey, salt, agricultural produce and lead from the mines in Swaledale were transported by sea to London and to the North East coastal ports.

With the expansion of the coal trade in the 17th Century, Stockton became the major river port when coal was carried to the docks from the Durham coalfield by horse and cart to be shipped to London and overseas. Originally Stockton-on-Tees was a rural community, but with the Industrial Revolution came huge developments in heavy industry and massive expansion downstream to the estuary.

The river previously meandered first south and then north of its current channel. In the early 19th Century the River Tees was altered between Stockton-on-Tees and Middlesbrough. Later, the river was straightened, thus saving money and time in navigation.

Once heavily industrialised, the river at Stockton and Thornaby has been transformed over the past few decades, not least of all through the construction of the Tees Barrage in the 1990s. With water held at a constant level this urban section of the river is now used for all kinds of sport and recreation. Meanwhile the tranquil countryside upstream, and the open landscapes of the estuary downstream, offer some great opportunities for walking and wildlife watching.

These trails enable you to explore our exciting mix of built, natural and industrial heritage.

Key

- Trail (7.5 miles)
- Ingleby Trail (See page 6)
- Teesdale Way

ON-ON-TEES



THORNABY TRAIL

1

A circular walk through the woodlands and countryside of Thornaby. Including some delightful paths along the Thornaby bank of the River Tees.



▲ St. Peter's Church, Thornaby Green



▲ Old River Tees

Highlights

1. Completed in 1995, the **Tees Barrage** was built to control the flow of the river and protect the surrounding areas from flooding. The water above the barrage is permanently held at high tide making the river perfect for canoeing, paddle boarding and rowing.

2. The trail runs alongside the Old River Tees. This was the former **Mandale loop**; one of two large meanders which restricted navigation up the river. Both this and the Portrack loop to the north were bypassed by two 'cuts' constructed in the 1800s.

The area is now a tidal fragment of saltmarsh and a rare habitat which includes plants such as sea aster, sea plantain and common glasswort.

3. To the north-east of Stainsby Wood lie the deserted remains of the **medieval village of Stainsby** and part of its surviving open field system. The village survives as a series of earthworks and buried remains in the fields south and east of Stainsby Grange Farm.

4. A beautiful oak and ash woodland, **Thornaby Wood** separates Thornaby and Ingleby Barwick. Two WWII pill-boxes located here, acted as an infantry post for up to five riflemen who helped defend the nearby Thornaby Airfield.

5. **Thornaby Green** is a beautiful, tranquil spot a short distance away from the river and provides the setting for St Peter's Church that dates from the 12th Century. Thornaby Green is a designated Conservation Area.

Distance

7.5 miles

Estimated walk time

4 hours

Suggested start/finish

Tees Barrage or any other location within Thornaby

Route Information

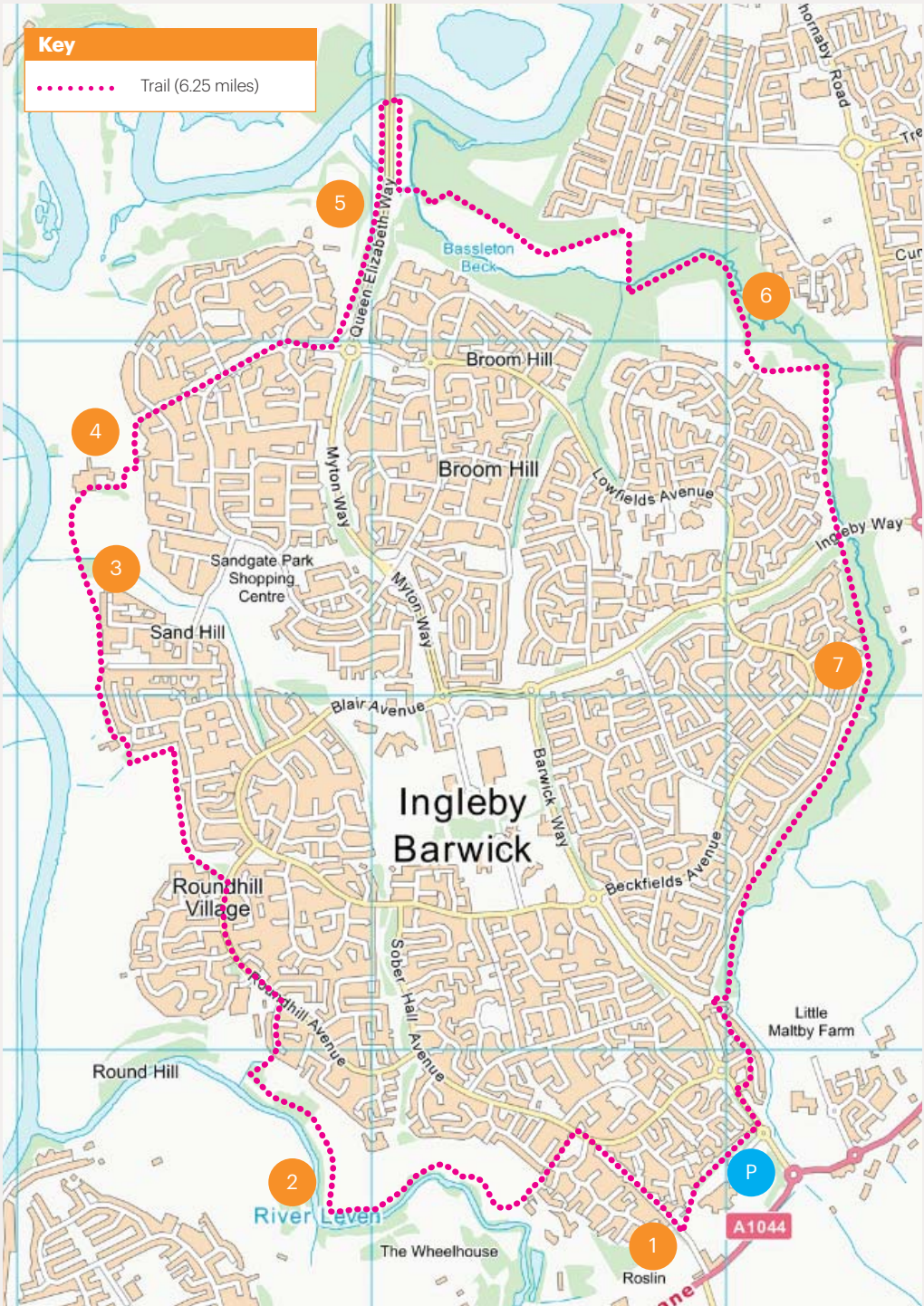
Surfaces – All on all-weather surfaced paths between Victoria Bridge, Tees Barrage and Teesside Park. Remainder of route mainly on roughly surfaced and unsurfaced paths, including woodland tracks and grass.

Facilities – Café and pub at Tees Barrage.

Other cafés, pubs and shops a short distance off the route in Teesside Park, Thornaby and Stockton.

▼ Near Stainsby Beck





INGLEBY TRAIL

2

Ingleby Barwick now has over 8,300 houses and is home to some 23,000 people. This trail follows the waterways that circle it. Revealing the area's rural heritage.



▲ River Tees at Barwick Farm



▲ River Leven, Ingleby Barwick

Highlights

1. **Windmill Way** – a marker indicates the crash site of a WWII aircraft that attempted to land at Thornaby Airfield. The road, school and park are named after the 18th Century (c1750) High Leven Windmill that was converted into a residential dwelling in 1968.

2. The **River Leven** runs from the edge of the North Yorkshire Moors, through Great Ayton, Stokesley and Hutton Rudby before joining the River Tees near Roundhill, a short way downstream.

3. The trail follows an old bridleway between White House Farm and Barwick Farm. **Sand Hill** to the east has lovely views towards the River Tees and Eaglescliffe to the west.

4. **Barwick Farm** lies on the east bank of the River Tees. The

remains of the medieval hamlet surround the present farm buildings. Earthworks define plots of medieval farms.

5. The trail crosses **Bassleton Beck**, which runs around the northern and eastern edge of Ingleby Barwick. Between here and the River Tees is Bassleton Wood, a beautiful stretch of ancient deciduous woodland.

6. **Thornaby Woods** are ancient woodlands (over 400 years old) comprising of mainly oak and ash. Roe deer are seen here. Within the woods are two WWII pill-boxes constructed to defend the nearby Thornaby Airfield.

7. **Thornaby Plantation and Ingleby Woods** were extended in 1990. Trees planted comprise of English deciduous, such as oak, ash, birch and rowan.

Distance
6.25 miles

Estimated walk time
3 hours 30 minutes

Suggested start/finish
Anywhere in Ingleby Barwick

Route Information

Parking – Windmill Park car park, Windmill Way.

Surfaces – A mix of surfaced and unsurfaced paths (including some potentially muddy sections through woodlands and fields), with some on-road sections.

Facilities – No facilities along the trail itself, but pubs and shops a short distance away from the main route at various locations in Ingleby Barwick.

▼ Wild marsh orchids





EGGLESCLIFFE & AISLABY TRAIL

3

A figure-of-eight following the loop of the Tees near Yarm and exploring the beautiful villages and countryside north of the river.



▲ Egglescliffe and the Tees



▲ Teesdale Way at Egglescliffe

Highlights

1. Originally built on the orders of Bishop Skirlaw of Durham around 1400, **Yarm Bridge** has been altered many times over the centuries. During the English Civil War **Egglescliffe** was heavily involved in guarding the bridge on behalf of the Royalists, while Parliamentarian forces occupied Yarm leading to a battle on 1 February 1643.

2. **Yarm** was the first port to develop on the River Tees. Wharves once occupied the riverbank, and back as far as the 12th and 13th Centuries, farmers in the surrounding area brought their wool to Yarm where it was loaded on ships and sent to Scotland, France and Flanders.

3. The **River Leven** joins the Tees at this point. The high land at the confluence is **Round Hill**

the site of a former Norman castle.

4. Today's **Egglescliffe village** mainly dates from medieval times, although the village was mentioned in the 11th Century Domesday Book. Egglescliffe Village has 28 Grade 2 listed buildings, the Church of St. John The Baptist is listed Grade 1.

5. Half a mile long and some 22m above the river, the **Yarm Railway Viaduct** was completed in 1851 at a cost of £44,500. It has 43 arches and is constructed with around seven million bricks!

6. In the 1700s, a mile upstream from **Aislaby** a small quay was built at Low Worsall. Lead and other goods were loaded onto horse drawn boats as the river here was tidal.

Distance

Entire Trail: **5.5 miles**
Egglescliffe Loop: **3 miles**
Aislaby Loop: **2.4 miles**

Estimated walk time

Entire Trail: **3 hours**
Egglescliffe Loop: **1 hour 45 minutes**
Aislaby Loop: **1 hour 15 minutes**

Suggested start/finish

Yarm Bridge

Route information

Parking – Yarm High St.

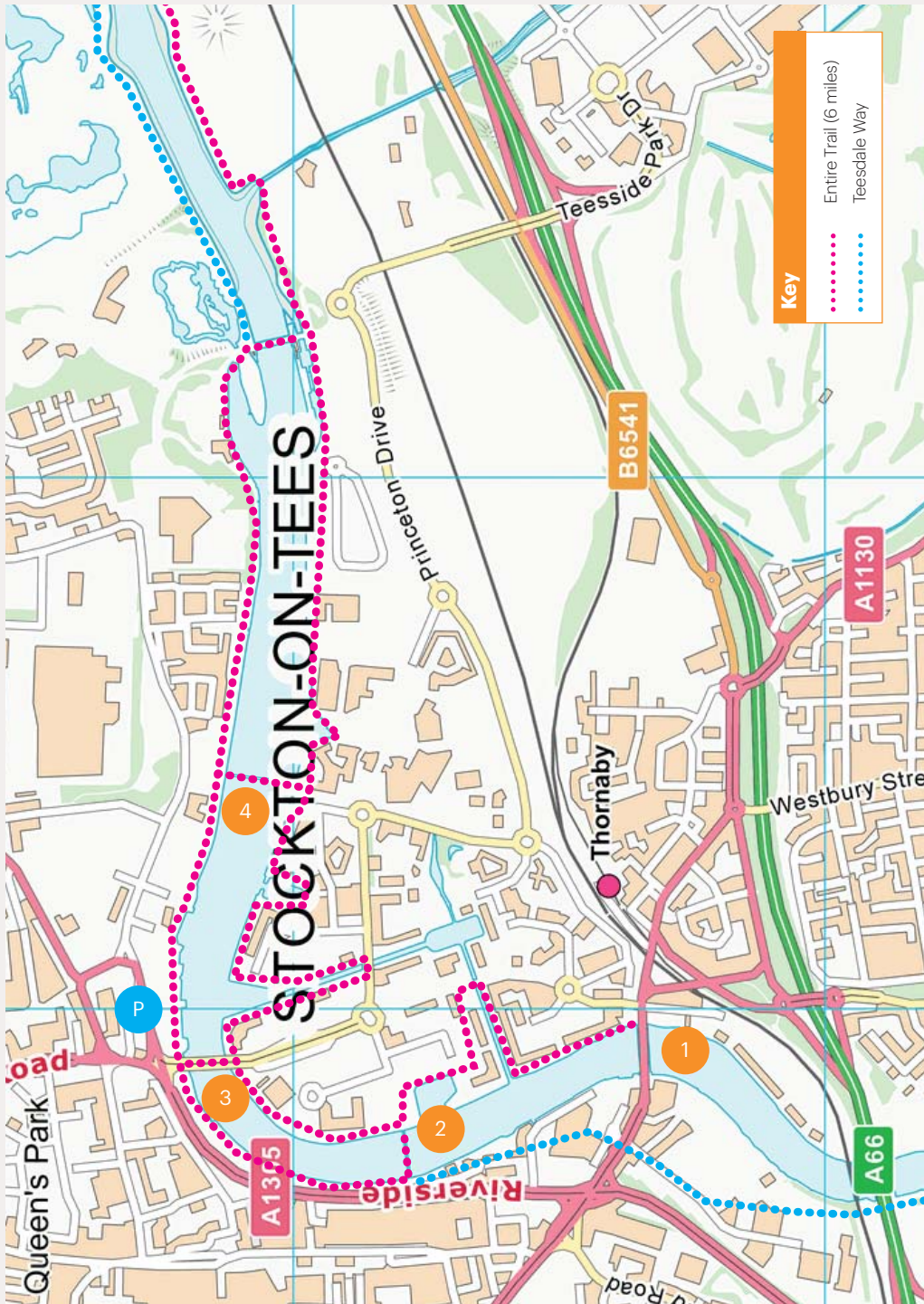
Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

Surfaces – mainly grass and field-edge footpaths.

Refreshments – Pubs and cafés in Yarm. Pub in Egglescliffe Village.

▼ Yarm Railway Viaduct





EIGHT BRIDGES WAY

VICTORIA BRIDGE TO TEES BARRAGE

4

Following part of the Eight Bridges Way this trail allows great access to the River Tees Corridor and provides differing views of the bridges and surrounding landscape along the way.



▲ Victoria Bridge



▲ Millennium Bridge

Highlights

1. Designated as Grade II listed, the **Victoria Bridge** was built between 1882 and 1887, replacing an old masonry bridge built in 1769. It has three parabolic arches each consisting of eight ribs of wrought iron. Designed by Harrison Haytor and Charles Neate and built by Whitaker Brothers of Leeds. The bridge was formally opened in 1887 and was named to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

2. The **Millennium Bridge** is a result of a competition that was won by a team from Ove Arup and Birse Construction. The bridge is a cable-stayed design. It has a 40m (131 ft) 'A' frame pylon/mast with fanned cables and has a total span of 153m (502 ft). Fabricated in Spain and constructed on site by Birse

Construction North East, the bridge was completed in December 2000 at a cost of £1.4m.

3. The **Princess of Wales Bridge** was opened on 23 September 1992 to give access to the reclaimed industrial area of Thornaby. Built by Tarmac Construction at a cost of £3m, it has a central span of some 40m.

4. This footbridge was built at a cost of £15m, was opened on 14 May 2009 and named the **Infinity Bridge** because its shape, when reflected in the river, resembles the mathematical symbol for infinity. The design, by Expedition Engineering and architect Spence Associates, was chosen from a RIBA design competition in 2003.

Distance

6 miles

Estimated walk time

3.5 hours (one way)

Suggested start/finish

Tees Barrage or Stockton Town Centre

Route information

Parking – Stockton Town Centre or Tees Barrage.

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

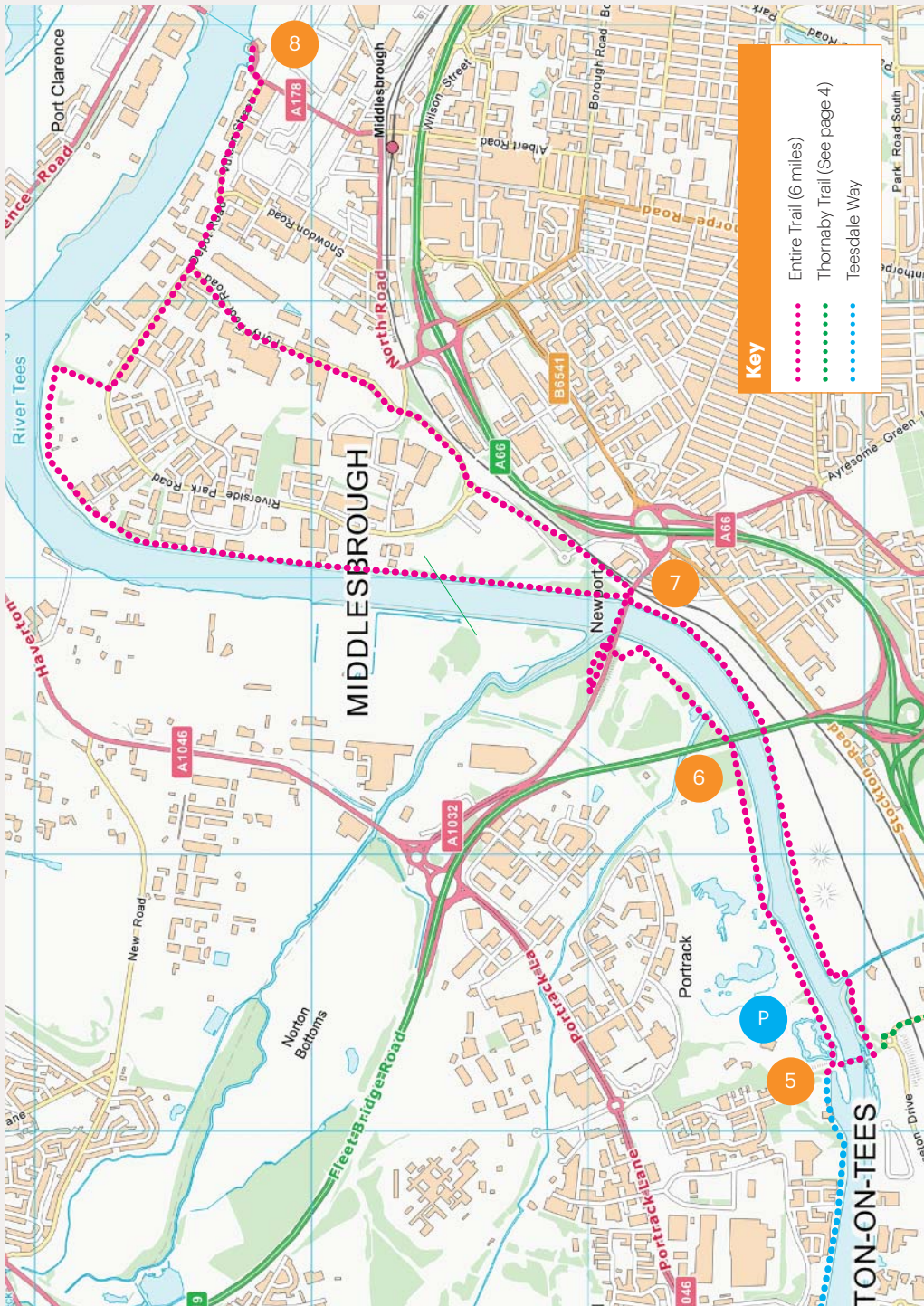
Surfaces – All surfaced paths. Route suitable for cycling and walking. The various bridges make it easy to modify the route.

▼ Infinity Bridge



WILDLIFE WATCH TUFTED DUCK





EIGHT BRIDGES WAY

TEES BARRAGE TO TRANSPORTER BRIDGE

5

This section of the Eight Bridges Way takes in more important crossing points of the River Tees. An urban trail that includes the Tees Barrage, Newport Bridge, and ends at the iconic Tees Transporter Bridge.



▲ Tees Barrage



▲ Newport Bridge

Highlights

5. Completed in 1995, the **Tees Barrage** was built to control the flow of the river and protect the surrounding areas from flooding. The water above the barrage is permanently held at high tide making the river perfect for canoeing, paddle boarding and rowing. There is plenty of wildlife to spot in and around the river; from mute swans and cormorants to salmon and crowd favourites, the entertaining seals that can often be seen bobbing up and down in the river. It has even been known that dolphins travel down as far as the Tees Barrage from the North Sea!

6. The **A19 Tees Viaduct** is 2.9km long with 68 spans. The nine spans over the river have a clearance of 20.73m and it carries around 115,000 vehicles per day.

7. Built by Dorman Long & Co Ltd, the **Newport Bridge** provided 36.6m headroom and 76.2m clear width of water when raised. The machinery for raising and lowering the bridge was located at the centre of the 2,876 tonnes lifting span. The decline in shipping led to the lifting span being permanently fixed down in 1990.

8. Opened on 17 October 1911, the **Transporter Bridge** was designed by GC Imbault of Cleveland Bridge Engineering Co., Darlington and was built by Sir William Arrol and Co. Vehicles and foot passengers are carried by means of a suspended gondola. It remains the largest of the transporter bridges operating worldwide and represents an elegant solution to providing headroom for the sailing ships that used the river.

Distance

6 miles (entire trail)

Estimated walk time

1 hour 50 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Tees Barrage or Stockton Town Centre

Route information

Parking – Stockton Town Centre or Tees Barrage.

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

Train to Thornaby Station.

Surfaces – All surfaced paths. Route suitable for cycling and walking. Please note: the Transporter Bridge is closed until March 2021.

▼ Transporter Bridge



WILDLIFE WATCH GREY SEAL





NORTH TEES TRAIL PART 1

6

Seal Sands is of international importance due to it being the only significant area of inter-tidal mud flats between Holy Island to the north and the Humber to the south.



▲ Knot Feeding



▲ North Gare Sands

Highlights

1. Gaining its name from the large number of seals that populate its banks, **Teessmouth National Nature Reserve** is tucked neatly next to North Tees and is home to large multi-national companies, central to the region's prosperity. More than 1,700 people are employed on Seal Sands by companies with an aggregate turnover of more than £900m each year. Today, oil importing and exporting remains one of Teesside's most important industries utilising six jetties at Seal Sands.

The mud flats at Seal Sands are areas where sedimentation has occurred due to the decreasing energy of the River Tees as it reaches its mouth, thus making it rich in organic content. Despite the presence of

industry and heavy traffic, the location provides a sense of isolation, with the security fences surrounding the works creating a place with little human disturbance, allowing birds and mammals to flourish.

Today the area is home to in excess of 30,000 ducks and waders during the colder months, with industry lighting allowing wading birds to feed around the clock. Sadly, due to the results of heavy pollution and dredging, by the 1930s the sight of a seal was very rare. By 1960 the grey seal had returned, followed by the rarer common seal in the 1980s, and today around 100 seals can be found lounging on the sandbanks. The viewing hide overlooking Greatham Creek provides an opportunity to observe the seals.

Distance
3.5 miles

Estimated walk time
1 hour 20 minutes

Suggested start/finish
North Gare car park/
Teessmouth (National Nature Reserve) car park

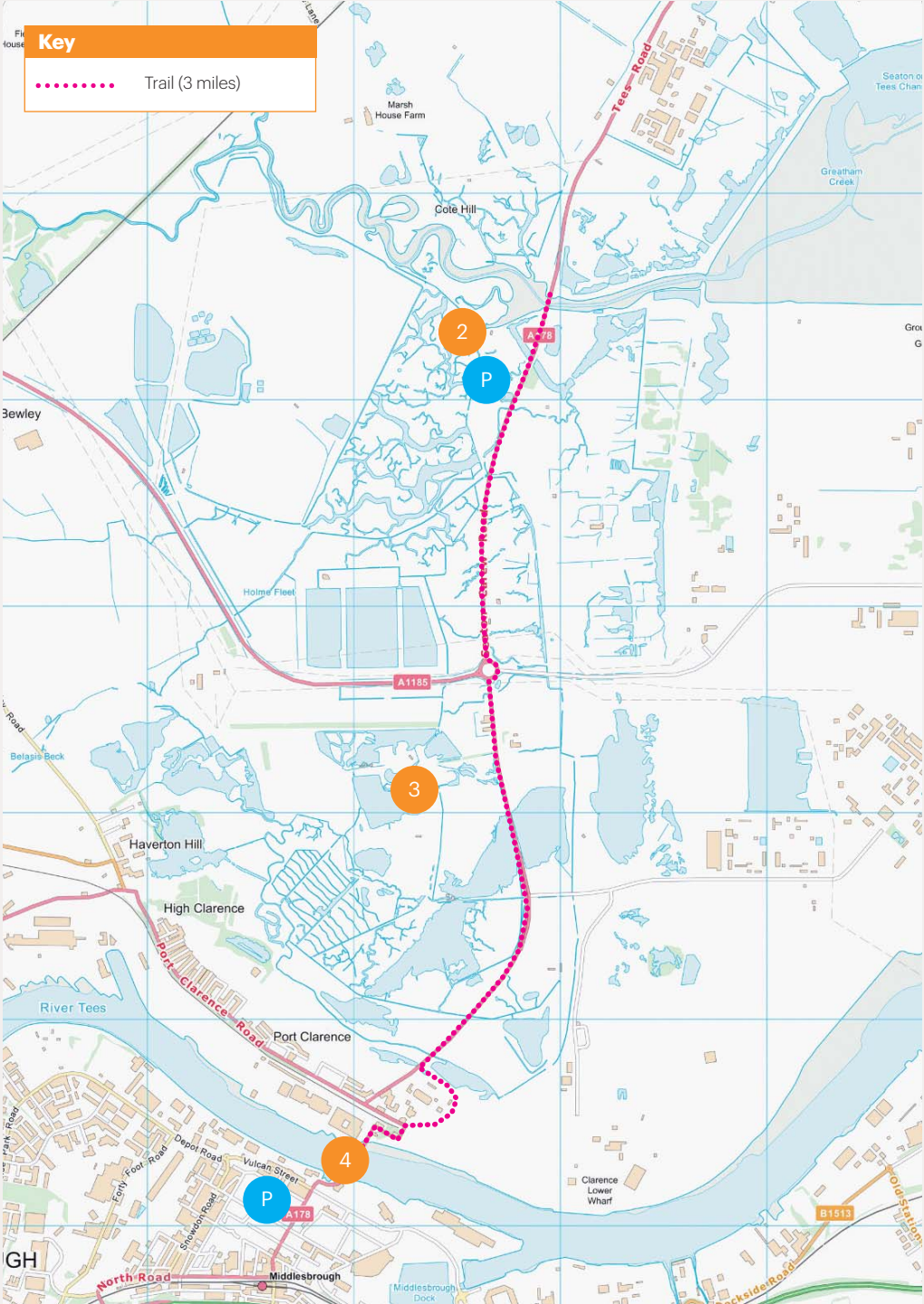
Route information

Parking – The North Gare car park (accessed via a minor road) is well signposted from the main road to the north of the Hartlepool Power Station. Seal Sands can be accessed from the car park at Cowpen Marsh just south of the bridge over Greatham Creek.

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

WILDLIFE WATCH COMMON SEAL





NORTH TEES TRAIL PART 2

7

A popular walk through the spectacular, open wetlands and saltmarshes of Hartlepool and the industrial landscapes of Port Clarence and Middlesbrough.



▲ RSPB Saltholme



▲ Seal Viewing Hide

Highlights

2. To the south of **Greatham Creek** a large area of inter-tidal habitat has been created. A cut made in the old embankment alongside Greatham Creek, allows this area to flood at high tide. You may see wading birds such as curlew and redshank feeding and grey and common seals hauled out along the Creek when the tide is low.

3. **RSPB Saltholme** is a 660 hectare wetland nature reserve, often described as an oasis in the heart of industrial Teesside. The reserve provides a mixture of lowland wet grassland, reed bed, open pools and meadow habitats. Seasonal wildlife include great crested grebe, gadwall and tufted duck. The visitor centre has a café serving hot food, a shop and toilet facilities. See www.rspb.org.uk

4. Opened on the 17 October 1911, the **Transporter Bridge** was designed by GC Imbault of Cleveland Bridge Engineering Co., Darlington and was built by Sir William Arrol and Co. Vehicles and foot passengers are carried by means of a suspended gondola. It remains the largest of the transporter bridges operating worldwide.

Please note: the Transporter Bridge is closed until March 2021.

This route forms part of England Coast Path, a 2,700 mile continuous footpath around the entirety of England – the longest footpath in the world

Distance

3 miles

Estimated walk time

1 hour 45 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Greatham Creek/
Transporter Bridge

Route information

This walk is on tarmac.

Start the walk at Teesmouth National Nature Reserve car park south of Greatham Creek and head south along A178.

Parking – There is a car park located at Cowpen Marsh just south of the bridge over Greatham Creek.

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

WILDLIFE WATCH SHELL DUCK



MIDDLESBROUGH TRAILS



Trail 1
Sailor's Trods Historic Trail
Page 40



Trail 2
Acklam Hall -
Old River Tees
Page 42



Trail 3
Iron Masters Trail
Page 44

Trail 4
Stainsby Hall
& Stainton
Page 46



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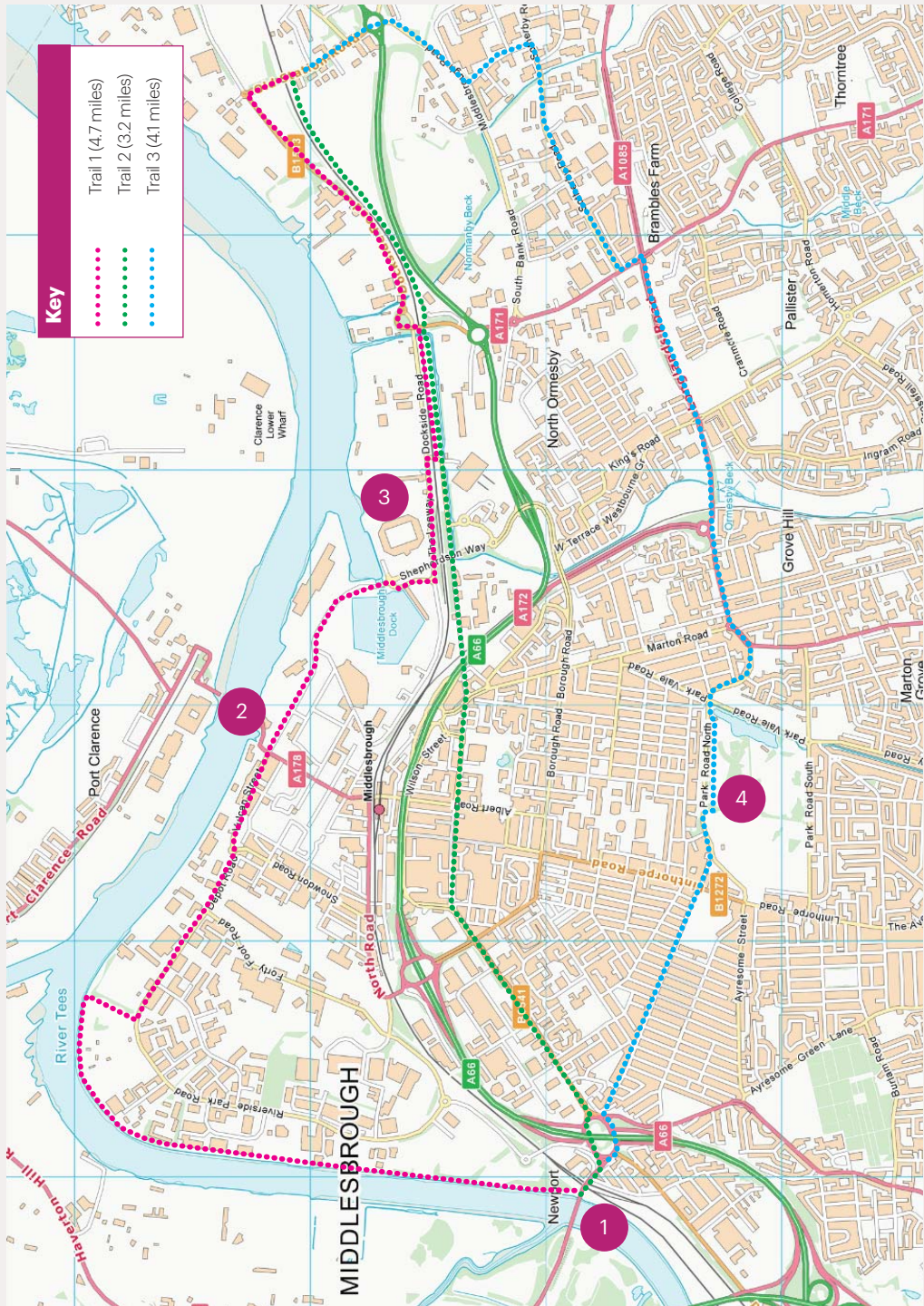
Upload your pics to Instagram.
[#heritagetrails](#)

INTRODUCTION

In the early 19th Century the area we now know as Middlesbrough was a vast salt marsh and home to less than 40 people. The extension of the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1827 meant a new branch line was built towards the newly formed Port Darlington (in the vicinity of the current Transporter Bridge) and Middlesbrough was born.

Initially a port to ship coal, the discovery of iron ore in the nearby Eston Hills led to the establishment of an iron and steel industry on the south bank of the Tees with the town becoming a world leader in iron production towards the end of the 19th Century. The demands of industry led to the reclamation of large areas of marshland on the south side of the river where the ground level was increased by at least four metres through the tipping of millions of tons of slag and waste from the iron and steelworks.

Around this time chemical industries were also developing on the north side of the river with the exploitation of brine and with chlorine, soda and salt works at the newly formed Port Clarence. This increasing industrial activity led to a massive house-building programme and Middlesbrough trebled in size as surrounding towns joined together. This growing population needed schools, churches and shops, whilst the growth of the railways the road network led to improved communications and the building of key bridges across the River Tees. The most significant of these being the Victoria Bridge in Stockton along with the Transporter and Newport Bridges in Middlesbrough.



SAILOR'S TRODS HISTORIC TRAIL

1

In the early 19th Century, before Middlesbrough developed into the town we see today, the ports of Cargo Fleet and Newport were linked by footpaths known as Sailor's Trods.



▲ Transporter Bridge



▲ Riverside Stadium

These short-cuts were used by working seamen who needed to get to Teesmouth and the coast. These trails follow the routes of the historic 'Trods'.

Highlights

1. Newport Bridge is a vertical-lift bridge spanning the river linking Middlesbrough with the borough of Stockton-on-Tees. Completed in 1934, the bridge was built by local company Dorman Long. It was the first large vertical-lift bridge in Britain and although it no longer lifts, it still acts as a road bridge in its permanently down position.

2. The Transporter Bridge (currently closed Autumn 2020) was opened 1911 and carries a suspended 'gondola', traversing across the river in 90 seconds. The gondola can carry 200 people, nine cars, or six cars

and one minibus. The bridge joins the A178 in Middlesbrough to Hartlepool Road.

3. Riverside Stadium is home of Middlesbrough Football Club and attracts a large and passionate crowd for every home game. Opening in 1995 its current capacity is 34,742.

4. Albert Park was completed in 1868 as a conscious need to provide a "green lung" to ease the plight of the burgeoning industrial population of the town. Officially opened by Prince Arthur of Connaught, the park was named after his father Prince Albert and was home to the original Middlesbrough Football Club. Facilities include a visitor centre, roller skating rink, café, boat hire, tennis courts, bowling greens, play areas and a bandstand.

Distance

Trail 1: 4.7 miles

Trail 2: 3.2 miles

Trail 3: 4.1 miles

Estimated walk time

Trail 1: 2 hours

Trail 2: 1 hour 20 minutes

Trail 3: 1 hour 50 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Start: Newport Bridge

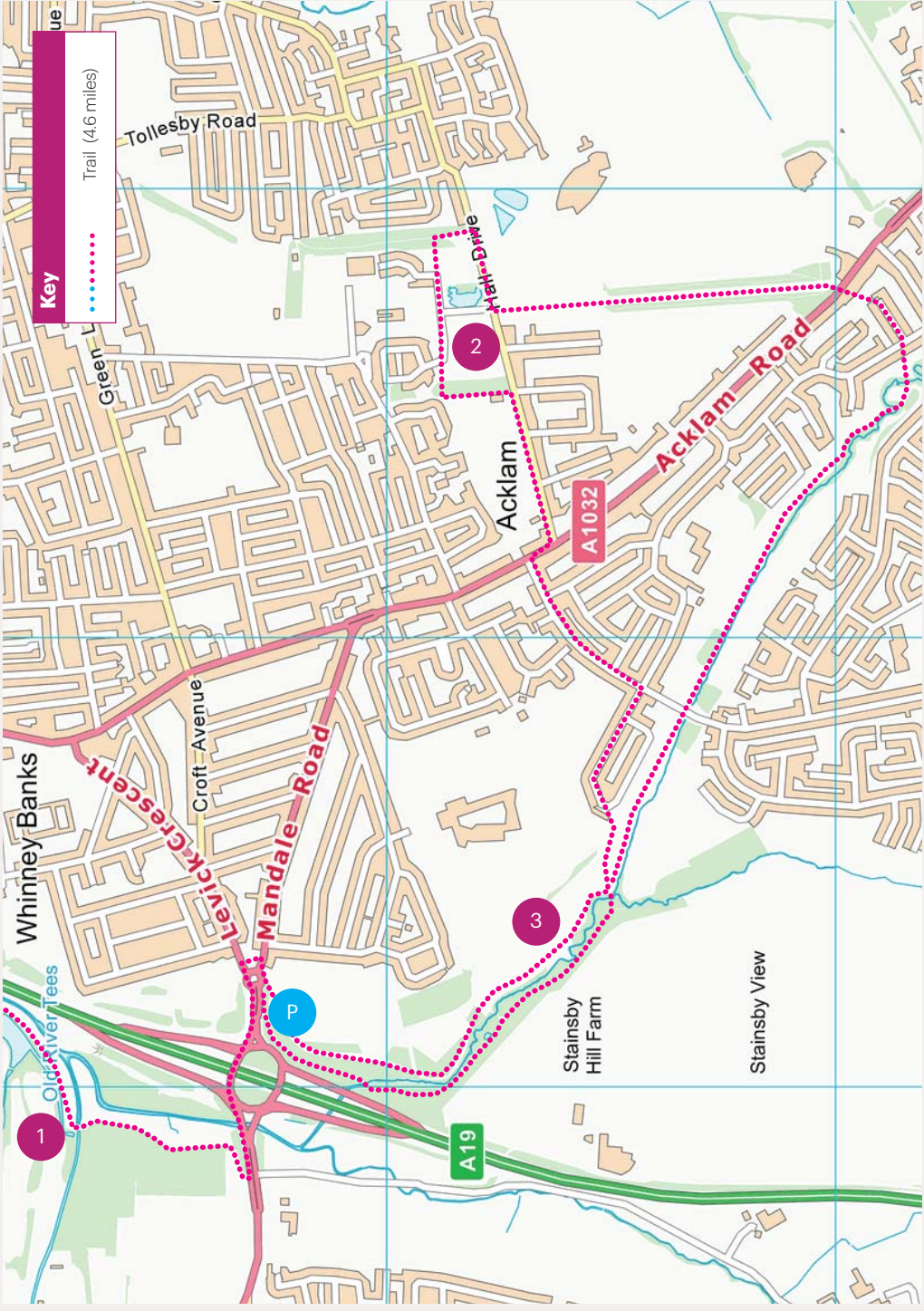
Finish: Imperial Park

Route

Trail 1 – Follow the bend of the river north from Newport Bridge and then travel east towards the Transporter Bridge and past the Riverside Stadium onto South Bank.

Trail 2 – Follow Newport Road north and then travel through the centre of Middlesbrough joining Trail 1 and the river south of Riverside Stadium.

Trail 3 – From Newport head towards Linthorpe along what is now Parliament Road, cross Linthorpe Road and head along Park Road North. Then travel along Longlands Road to the junction with Cargo Fleet Lane onto Sotherby Road turning north on Brunel Road towards the River Tees. Turn right on to Middlesbrough Road and progress on to Old Station Road to finish.



Key
Trail (4.6 miles)

ACKLAM HALL OLD RIVER TEES

2

In the first half of the 19th Century, the River Tees was straightened to enable ships to save time and money navigating between Stockton-on-Tees and Middlesbrough.



▲ Acklam Hall



▲ Old River Tees

The river previously meandered first south and then north of its current channel before two 'cuts', known as the Mandale Cut and the Portrack Cut, were made to straighten its course in 1810 and 1831 respectively. Before this, the journey by sailing barge from Thornaby to the mouth of the Tees could take as long as seven days. The current Tees Barrage is close to the site of the Mandale Cut.

Highlights

1. The course of the **Old River Tees** is still well defined as it meanders around what is now Teesside Retail Park.

2. The name **Acklam** or "Aclun" is believed to be Anglo-Saxon Old English for "the place of oaks". Once a small village, it is home to Acklam Hall which was, until 1928, the residence of the

Hustler family. Built by William Hustler, an English draper and Whig MP (1680–83) the house is Middlesbrough's only Grade I listed building and was also formerly a grammar school and a Middlesbrough College campus. Now in private ownership, it is an exclusive wedding venue with a spa, gym, conference rooms and a high quality restaurant.

3. **Bluebell Beck** winds through meadows and woodland west of Acklam. Enthusiastic local volunteer group 'The Friends of Bluebell Beck' help to maintain the area and part of the site is now designated as a 'Local Wildlife Site' for its meadow flora. A neutral grassland, its diverse species include herbs, yellow rattle, the common spotted orchid, birdsfoot trefoil and common knapweed.

Distance

4.6 miles

Estimated walk time

1 hour 50 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Start: Old River Tees

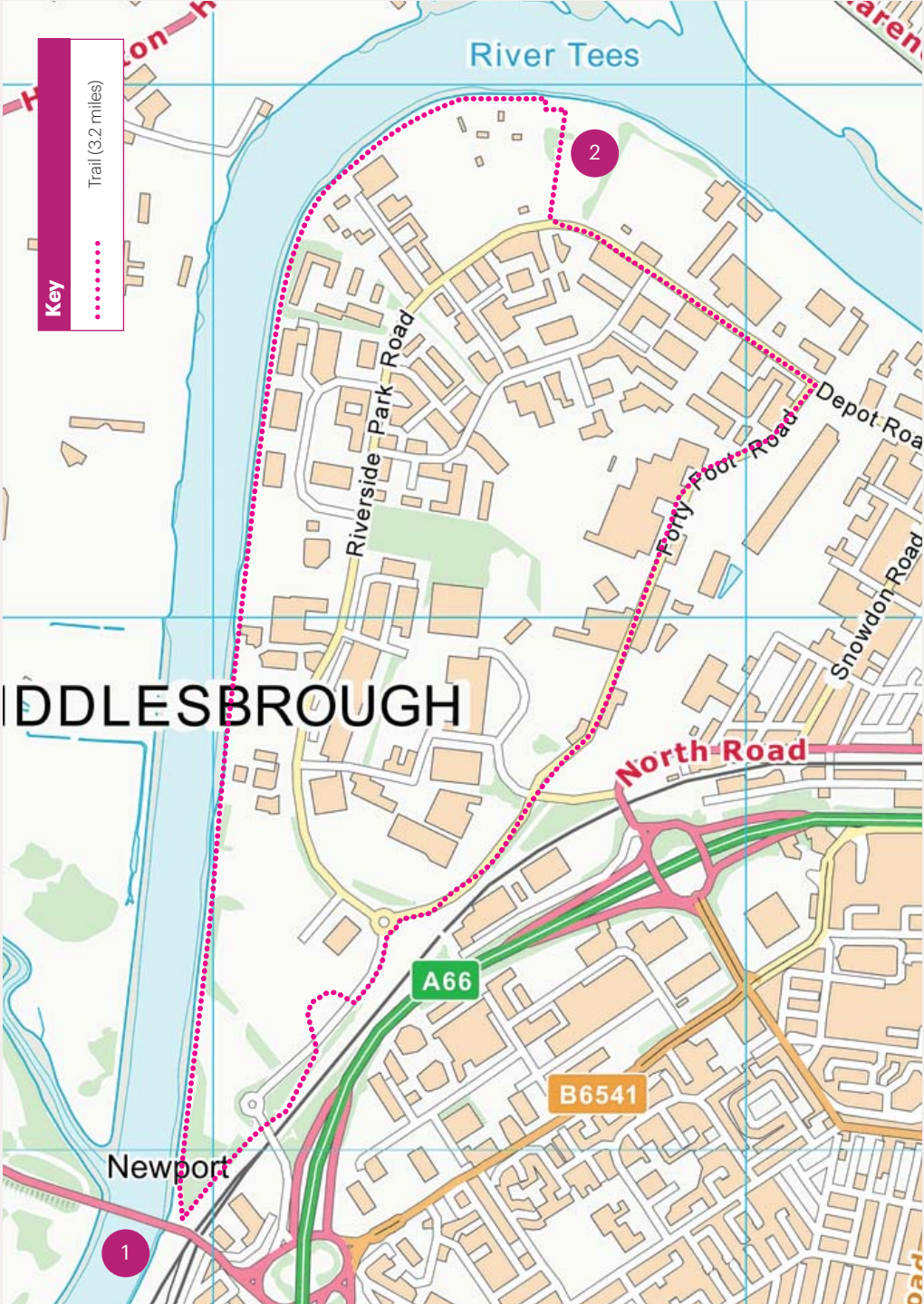
Finish: Mandale Interchange

Route

Begin in the district of Stockton-on-Tees moving along the course of the Old River Tees. Then travel south along the course of The Fleet and enter Middlesbrough west of the A19 Mandale Interchange. Move south-east and looping around the suburb of Acklam. Follow the route of Bluebell Beck back northwards and end at the Mandale Interchange.

▼ Yellow rattle





Key

Trail (3.2 miles)



MIDDLESBROUGH

IRON MASTERS TRAIL

3

Before industrialisation, this area was known as West Marsh – a salt marsh, whose surface was some 20 feet lower than at present. The area was tidal and would partially flood at high tide.



▲ Newport Bridge

In around 1850 iron ore or 'ironstone' was discovered in the Eston Hills to the South East of Middlesbrough. Easy access to this sought-after raw material led to the rapid growth of ironworks along the banks of the River Tees.

At the height of the boom in 1872, there were 95 blast furnaces along the river and the resulting growth in employment meant the population of Middlesbrough increased from 5,500 to 39,500. Many people lived in the crowded criss-crossing streets of the Cannon Street area across the railway bridge.

The area would become a world-leader in iron production and the air would have been continuously thick with dense smoke from the blast furnaces.



▲ Teessaurus Park

Highlights

1. **Newport Bridge** was built in 1934 by local firm Dorman Long. The first vertical lift bridge in the world, its platform once could be raised by 37m to allow larger vessels to pass under.

2. Built on the site of a former slag heap, **Teessaurus Park** opened in 1979 as the result of an 'Art to Landscape' competition where Middlesbrough Council commissioned a life-size steel sculpture of a Triceratops by artist Genevieve Glat and fabricated by Harts of Stockton. Two infant Triceratops, as well as a life-size Brachiosaurus, Brontosaurus, Mammoth, Stegosaurus and Tyrannosaurus sculptures, were added later. These were built by trainees at Amarc Training and Safety.

Distance
3.2 miles

Estimated walk time
1 hour 20 minutes

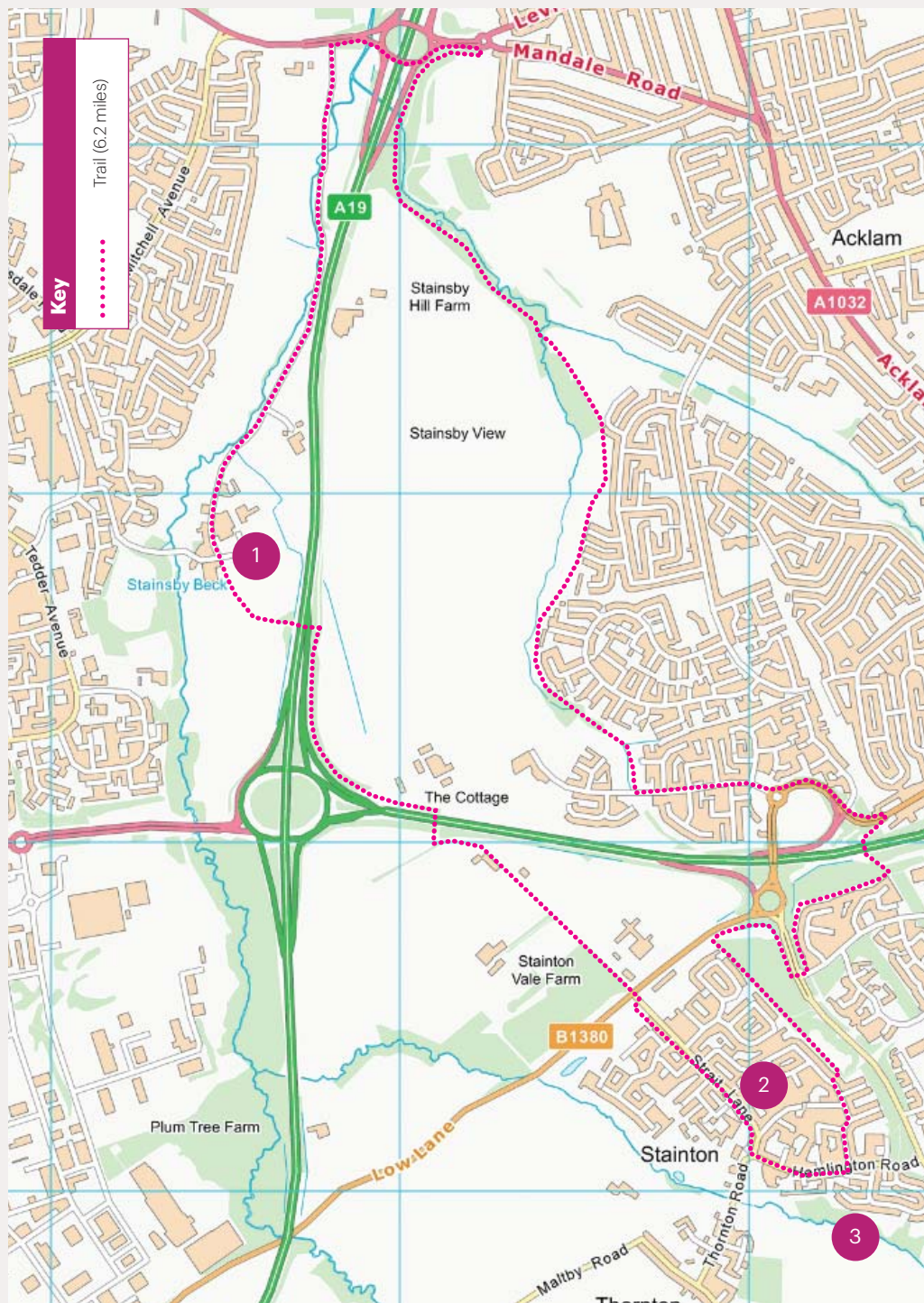
Suggested start/finish
Newport Bridge

Route

Follow the river path northwards from Newport Bridge towards Teesaurus Park. When you reach Teesaurus Park join Riverside Park Road and head east until its junction with Forty Foot Road. Then head south on Forty Foot Road parallel with the railway line towards the A66 Newport Interchange and Cannon Street.

WILDLIFE WATCH ROE DEER





Key
 Trail (6.2 miles)

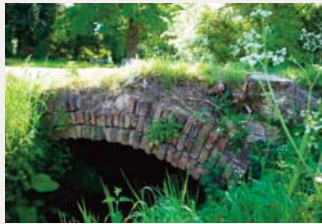
STAINSBY HALL & STANTON

4

Stainsby is a medieval village that was deserted by 1757. Its remains can still be seen today as a series of humps and bumps in pasture fields close to Acklam and Thornaby Town Centre.



▲ Stainsby Medieval Village



▲ Stainton Beck Footbridge

The majority of local medieval settlements are still inhabited today. However, some were abandoned and their remains are often visible as mounds and ditches in pasture fields.

Highlights

1. The village of **Stainsby** was first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. The name literally means 'Steinn's Hamlet' or 'Farm'. Steinn is a Scandinavian name and the ending 'by' suggests a Scandinavian settlement.

It is not known exactly when or why Stainsby became deserted. Like many other villages, it probably fell on hard times following the Black Death and the wars with Scotland. As population levels fell the remaining inhabitants will have moved to more prosperous

settlements such as Stainton and therefore Stainsby fell out of use. Stainton village has a population of approximately 3,000 and has been a settlement since before Saxon times.

2. **Stainton Church** dates back to the 12th Century and The Stainton Inn pub, on Meldyke Lane, was first licensed in 1897. Stainton Memorial Hall was built in 1844 originally as a school and, after WWI, was extended and repurposed into the memorial hall you see today.

3. **Stainton Quarry** straddles Stainton Beck and a footbridge joins it to Kell Gate Green on the other side of the beck, forming three hectares of community-run green space for local people to enjoy.

Distance
6.2 miles

Estimated walk time
2 hours 40 minutes

Suggested start/finish
A1130 roundabout at junction of Mandale Road and Levick Crescent

Route

Begin on the A1130 and head south towards Blue Bell Beck. Follow the course of Blue Bell Beck southwards to where it joins Stainton Beck then follow Stainton Beck towards Stainton Quarry. Crossing the A174 and joining Stainton Way turning left on Hemlington Road past Stainton Church and then right and northwards along Straight Lane and back north towards the A174. Cross the A174 past Stainsby Hall Farm and cross the A19 looping around the site of the medieval village of Stainsby. Cross the A19 again and head north parallel with the A19 until you reach the starting point.

▼ Stainton Church



HARTLEPOOL TRAILS



Trail 1
Greatham Circular
Page 50



Trail 2
Seaton Snooks Circular
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Trail 3
North Tees Trail Part 1
Page 54

Trail 4
North Tees Trail Part 2
Page 56



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INTRODUCTION

Explore this extraordinary coastal area north to Teesmouth and discover how humans, industry and nature exist in harmony.

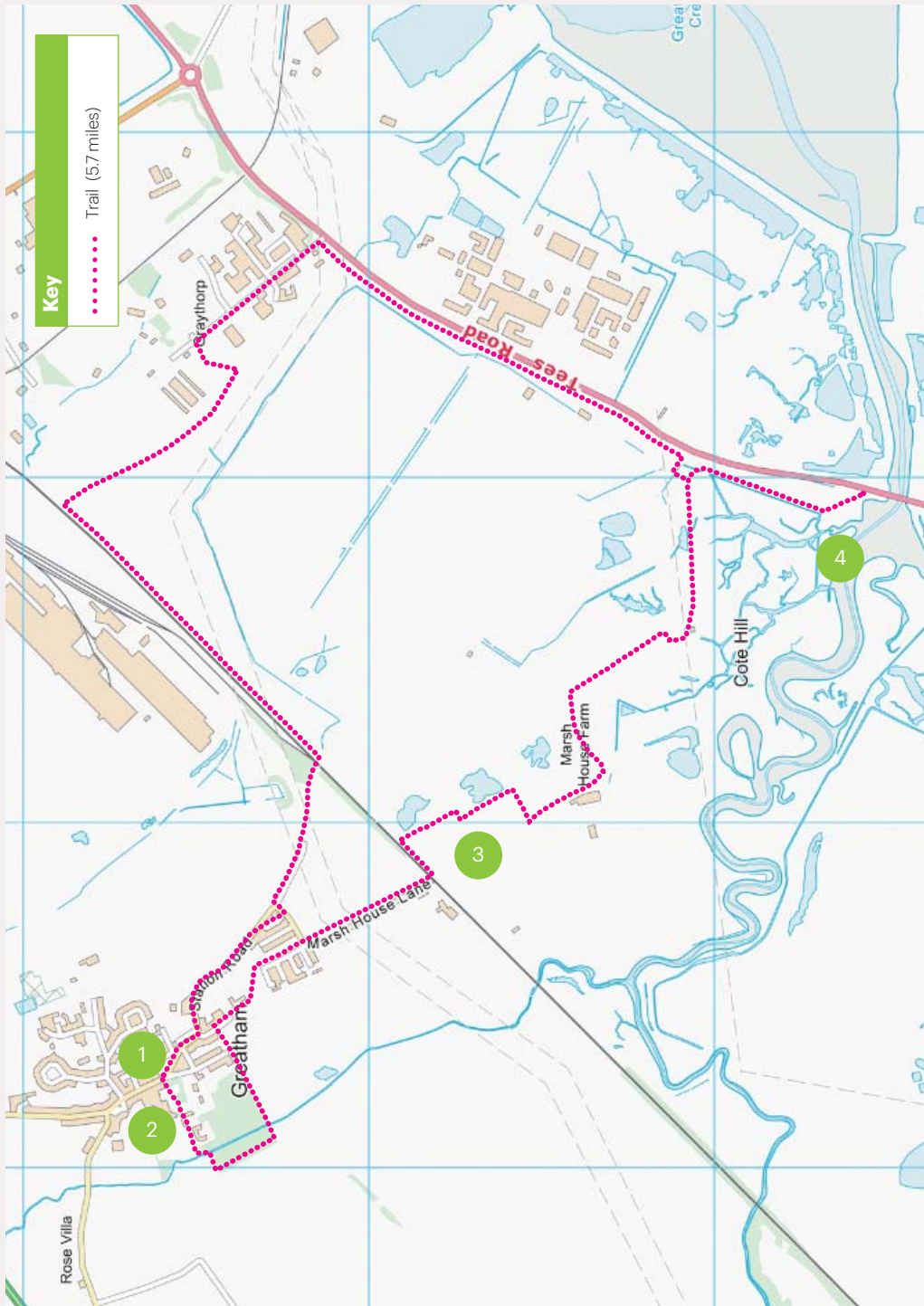
Seaton Carew is a small seaside resort situated on the North Sea coast at the mouth of the River Tees. The area is named after a Norman French family called 'Carou' who owned lands in the area and settled there while 'Seaton' means farmstead or settlement by the sea.

Seal Sands is an area of international importance as it's the only inter-tidal mudflat between Lindisfarne to its north and the Humber to the south.

On land recovered from the sea, the area around Seal Sands is home to leading names within the chemical industry such as Ineos, Fine Organics, Central Area Transmission System (BP Group), SABIC, Vertellus and ConocoPhillips.

Within this industrial landscape can be found Greatham, a picturesque rural village home to around a thousand people.

The area has a long history of salt works, but this declined in the 18th and 19th Centuries. In the middle of the 20th Century, Cerebos salt works were taken over by Sharwood's. Although the factory has closed, it has now been repurposed as office units.



GREATHAM CIRCULAR

1

Greatham Village first appears in written sources as Gretham in 1196. Today it is home to 1,000 people and a surprising number of points of interest all of which can be seen on this circular walk.



▲ Sheaf Thrower sculpture



▲ Seals at Greatham Creek

Highlights

1. The Sheaf Thrower

sculpture was erected in 1995 and commemorates the sheaf-throwing contest that has taken place annually at Greatham Feast for over 500 years. The birds perched in his hair represent a local rookery.

2. Founded in 1273 by the then Bishop of Durham, Robert de Stichell, **The Hospital of God** was originally a foundation to aid poor people. However, by the 16th Century, it had become a “house of entertainment for gentlemen”! Reforms in 1610 led to its original mission being resumed.

3. During excavation for water to supply a Vulcan rubber works in 1894, a 100m thick salt seam was discovered. Starting

as the Greatham Salt and Brine Company, the site was acquired by **Cerebos** in 1903 and **salt production** (consumer and industrial) on this site was to last for over 75 years. The site was damaged by German air raids in 1942. During its peak, the site employed 1,000 workers until Sharwood's closed the plant in 2002 due to dwindling demand.

4. **Greatham Creek** and surrounding land is part of Cowpen Marsh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This designation identifies the site as nationally important and gives it special legal protection. You may see wading birds such as curlew and redshank feeding and common seals hauled out along the Creek when the tide is low.

Distance

5.7 miles

Estimated walk time

2 hours 20 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Greatham Village

Getting there

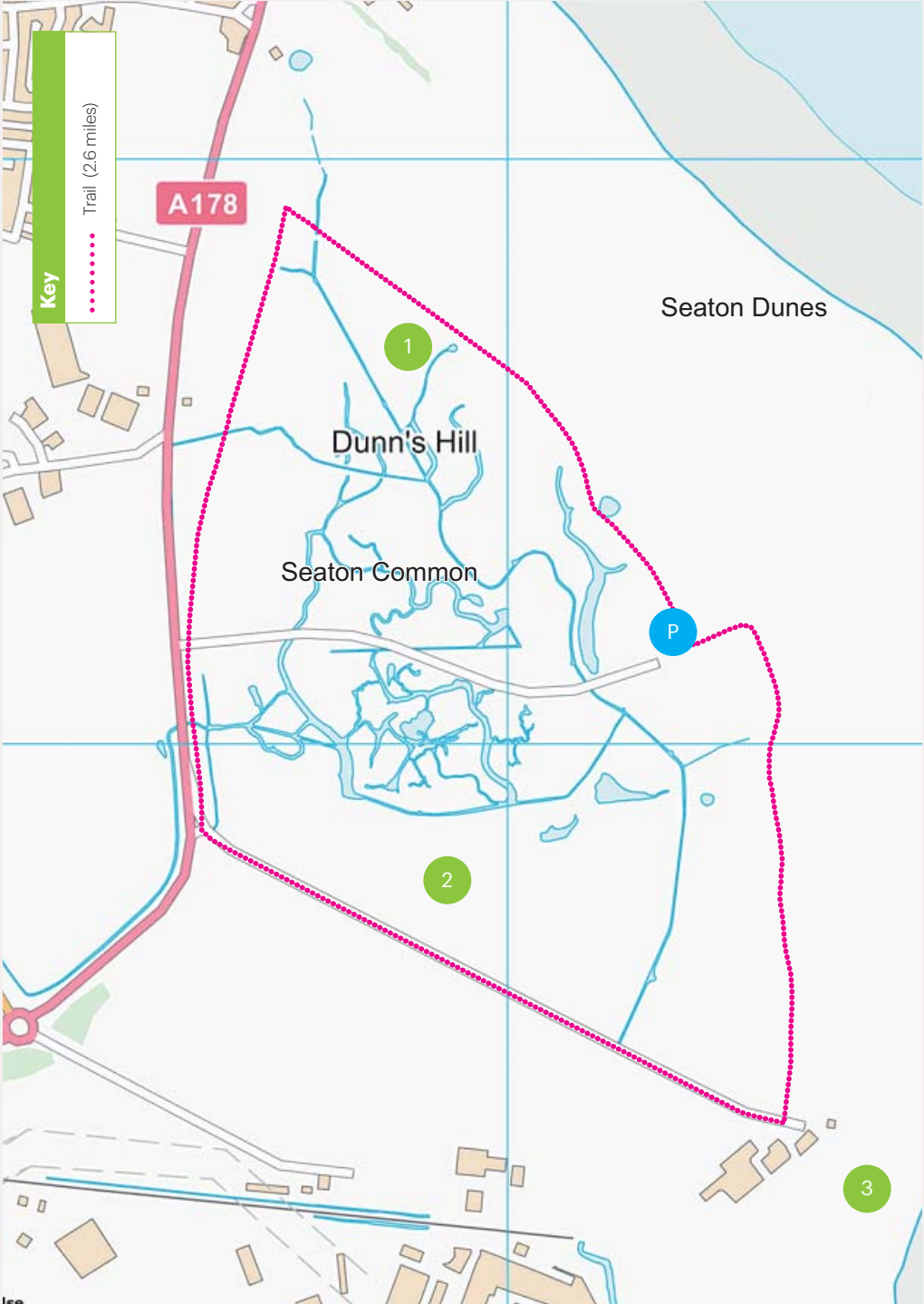
Greatham is situated approximately 2 miles to the south of Hartlepool.

Parking – From Hartlepool centre take the A689 south for 2 miles, turn left at Sapper's Corner, signposted Greatham. Car parking is available street-side in Greatham village and at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park situated off the Seal Sands Link Road (A1185).

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

WILDLIFE WATCH CURLEW





SEATON SNOOKS CIRCULAR

2

Originally a small fishing community, Seaton Carew became a thriving seaside resort in the 18th and 19th Centuries, particularly popular with the Quakers of Darlington during Victorian times.



▲ Damselfly



▲ Northern Marsh Orchids

Seaton Carew later became a fashionable seaside destination as visits to 'health' resorts gained popularity. This lovely circular walk is a great way to take in the wider area around the town.

Highlights

1. The grassy ash mounds that we see today at **Seaton Common** date back to medieval times and were created as salt was extracted by large fires, which evaporated the sea water to crystallise the salt. These features demonstrate the close relationship mankind has with the natural environment in this area that continues to this day.

2. **Seaton Common and Dunes Local Nature Reserve** is home to a vast number of resident and migratory wading birds, as

well as invertebrates and mammals. Across the golf course, you will find Seaton Dunes, one of the largest dune systems between Lindisfarne and the Humber, providing a rich and varied habitat for many plants and animals including purple milk vetch and curlew.

3. **Teesmouth National Nature Reserve (NNR)** is a protected area where wildlife comes first, although public access is allowed it is strictly controlled. Teesmouth NNR is especially important for its birdlife. The 355-acre site stretches from North Gare Sands down to Greatham Creek and plays host to over 20,000 waterfowl each year.

Distance
2.6 miles

Estimated walk time
1 hour

Suggested start/finish
Car Park

Route information

This walk is on tarmac and track through Seaton Snooks Common, which has gated and stiled access. There's an alternative to crossing the Common on the way back with no stiles or difficult ground.

Parking – To Seaton Carew: Take the A178 south for 3 miles from Hartlepool centre. Car parking is available at the Seaton Carew and the North Gare car park on Seaton Snooks Common.

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

WILDLIFE WATCH YELLOW WORT





Key

Trail (3.5 miles)

NORTH TEES TRAIL PART 1

3

Seal Sands is of international importance due to it being the only significant area of inter-tidal mud flats between Holy Island to the north and the Humber to the south.



▲ Knot Feeding



▲ North Gare Sands

Highlights

1. Gaining its name from the large number of seals that populate its banks, **Teessmouth National Nature Reserve** is tucked neatly next to North Tees and is home to large multi-national companies, central to the region's prosperity. More than 1,700 people are employed on Seal Sands by companies with an aggregate turnover of more than £900m each year. Today, oil importing and exporting remains one of Teesside's most important industries utilising six jetties at Seal Sands.

The mud flats at Seal Sands are areas where sedimentation has occurred due to the decreasing energy of the River Tees as it reaches its mouth, thus making it rich in organic content. Despite the presence of

industry and heavy traffic, the location provides a sense of isolation, with the security fences surrounding the works creating a place with little human disturbance, allowing birds and mammals to flourish.

Today the area is home to in excess of 30,000 ducks and waders during the colder months, with industry lighting allowing wading birds to feed around the clock. Sadly, due to the results of heavy pollution and dredging, by the 1930s the sight of a seal was very rare. By 1960 the grey seal had returned, followed by the rarer common seal in the 1980s, and today around 100 seals can be found lounging on the sandbanks. The viewing hide overlooking Greatham Creek provides an opportunity to observe the seals.

Distance

3.5 miles

Estimated walk time

1 hour 20 minutes

Suggested start/finish

North Gare car park/
Teessmouth (National Nature Reserve) car park

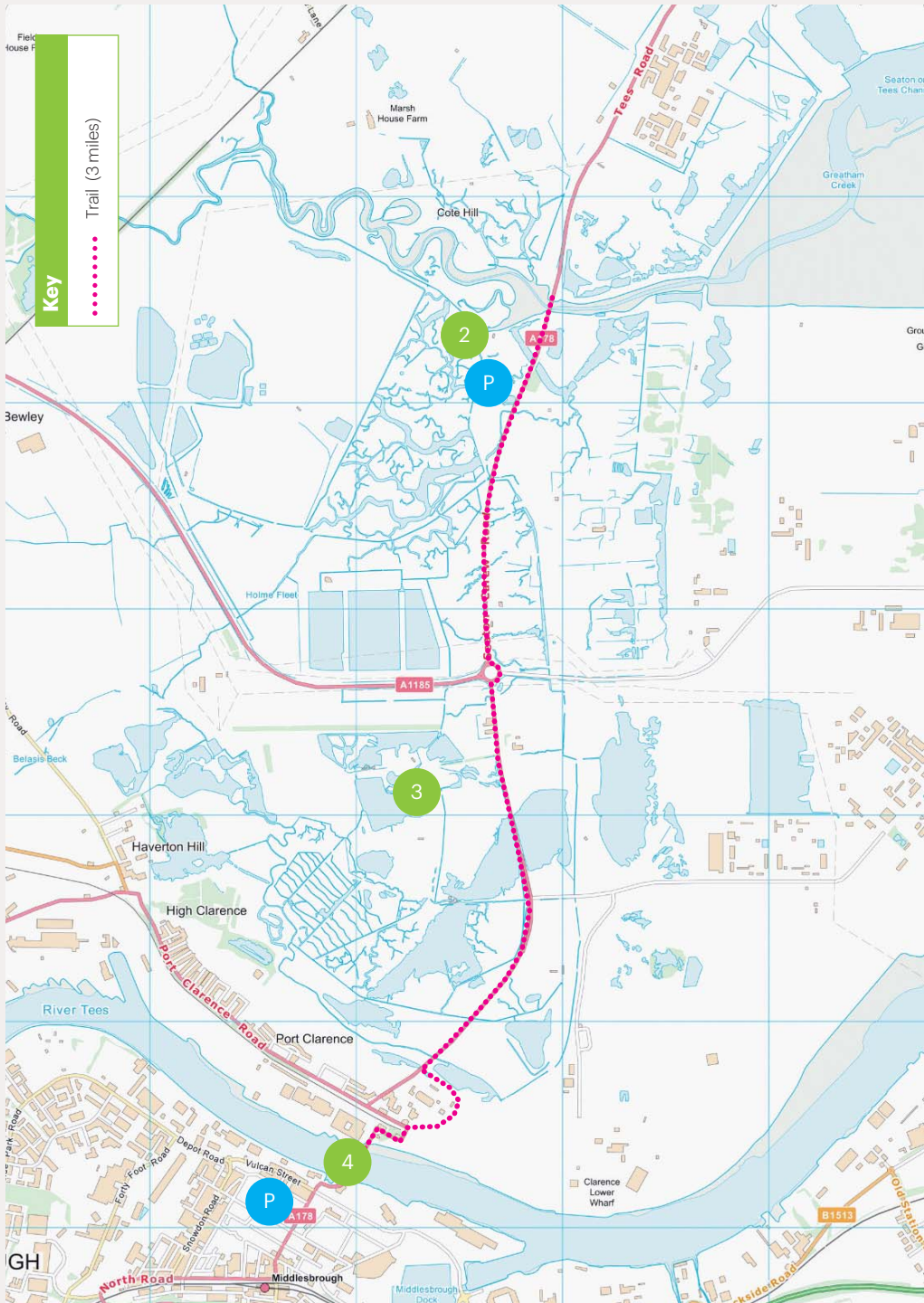
Route information

Parking – The North Gare car park (accessed via a minor road) is well signposted from the main road to the north of the Hartlepool Power Station. Seal Sands can be accessed from the car park at Cowpen Marsh just south of the bridge over Greatham Creek.

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

WILDLIFE WATCH COMMON SEAL





NORTH TEES TRAIL PART 2

4

A popular walk through the spectacular, open wetlands and saltmarshes of Hartlepool and the industrial landscapes of Port Clarence and Middlesbrough.



▲ RSPB Saltholme



▲ Seal Viewing Hide

Highlights

2. To the south of **Greatham Creek** a large area of inter-tidal habitat has been created. A cut made in the old embankment alongside Greatham Creek, allows this area to flood at high tide. You may see wading birds such as curlew and redshank feeding and grey and common seals hauled out along the Creek when the tide is low.

3. **RSPB Saltholme** is a 660 hectare wetland nature reserve, often described as an oasis in the heart of industrial Teesside. The reserve provides a mixture of lowland wet grassland, reed bed, open pools and meadow habitats. Seasonal wildlife include great crested grebe, gadwall and tufted duck. The visitor centre has a café serving hot food, a shop and toilet facilities. See www.rspb.org.uk

4. Opened on the 17 October 1911, the **Transporter Bridge** was designed by GC Imbault of Cleveland Bridge Engineering Co., Darlington and was built by Sir William Arrol and Co. Vehicles and foot passengers are carried by means of a suspended gondola. It remains the largest of the transporter bridges operating worldwide.

Please note: the Transporter Bridge is closed until March 2021.

This route forms part of England Coast Path, a 2,700 mile continuous footpath around the entirety of England – the longest footpath in the world

Distance

3 miles

Estimated walk time

1 hour 45 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Greatham Creek/
Transporter Bridge

Route information

This walk is on tarmac.

Start the walk at Teesmouth National Nature Reserve car park south of Greatham Creek and head south along A178.

Parking – There is a car park located at Cowpen Marsh just south of the bridge over Greatham Creek.

Buses – Bus times can be obtained by calling Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.info

WILDLIFE WATCH SHELL DUCK



REDCAR AND CLEVELAND TRAILS



Trail 1
South Gare Linear Trail
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Trail 2
Coatham Heritage Trail
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Trail 3
Redcar to South Bank Station Rail Trail
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Trail 4
South Tees Viewpoint Circular Walk
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INTRODUCTION

The Black Path from Middlesbrough to Redcar meanders through the heart of industrial Teesside. Once used by sailors to reach their ships as well as thousands of steel and iron workers commuting between home and their shifts. The cinder-covered route was also popular with families, who followed it from tightly packed terraces to Bran Sands and Redcar for fresh air, sand, sea and cockling. The Black Path forms part of the longer Teesdale Way and also forms part of the England Coast Path.

Over the last 150 years, the landscape has changed dramatically; where once upon a time at high tide, you would have crossed saltmarsh populated by farms, hamlets and the remains of an ancient salt-making industry. The Industrial Revolution brought with it ironworks, ship building yards and chemical industries dominating the river frontage as land was reclaimed from the tides and put to work. The advent of the railway forced the path to move to its current line, passing many train stations which have long since closed down, now empty and deserted.

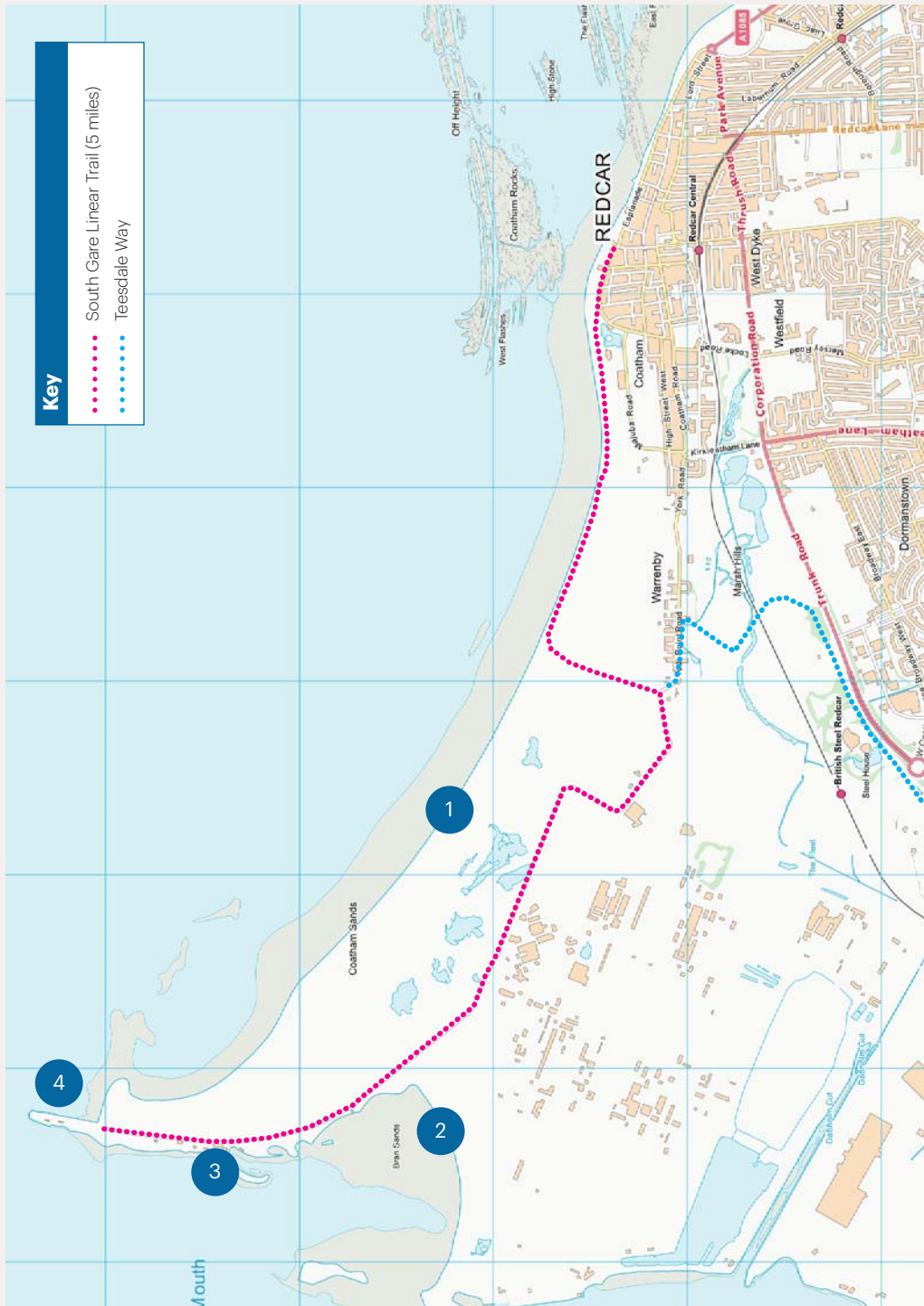
However time and tide waits for no man and today businesses still thrive along the river including Svitzer, a tugboat company, BOC and MPI Offshore. Teesport with its cranes and warehouses; the Lackenby steel rolling mills are all part of today's industrial Tees Valley and all visible from the Black Path.

Unusual flora is in abundance thanks to the steel slag which makes up much of the path's foundation. Including soft pink flowers of crown vetch to the strange dried flower heads of carline thistle to fragrant water mint and the brazen yellow flowers of coltsfoot – nature has found a way in this highly-industrialised place.

Key

South Gare Linear Trail (5 miles)

Teesdale Way



SOUTH GARE LINEAR TRAIL

1

Reclaimed from the North Sea by the Victorians, South Gare has offered safe harbour in stormy weather to ships off the coast and allowed for the dredging of the River Tees entrance for over a century.



▲ South Gare Lighthouse



▲ Bran Sands

Before the building of South Gare, permanent dry land stopped at Tod Point, giving way to Coatham Sands and the mudflats of Bran Sands. The creation of South Gare extends this by a further 2.5 miles. The Gare was constructed from 1861 to 1884 using five million tonnes of blast furnace slag and 18,000 tons of cement at a total cost of £219,393.

Highlights

1. **Coatham Sands** is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The dunes on the eastern flank are protected by three slag banks close to the breakwater, partly exposed at low tide. They are known as the German Charlies after a WWI German ship that ran aground there.

2. On the inner side of the breakwater is **Bran Sands**

known for its bird life and the wooden wreck of a ship in the sands – not to mention a number of underwater wrecks which lie off the coast.

3. **Paddy's Hole** is a small harbour constructed from slag in the lagoon. It is named Paddy's Hole because of the many Irishmen who helped build the South Gare. There are also two smaller harbours south of Paddy's Hole named Guy's Hole and Powder Hole.

4. The original **South Gare Battery** was built from 1890 to 1892 and fitted with two-guns. Over the years, its been modified, improved, and in 1938 the battery was reconstructed and fitted with two larger guns. At the end of the breakwater, you'll find **South Gare Lighthouse**, built in 1884.

Distance

5 miles

Estimated walk time

1 hour 40 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Start: Redcar Beacon

Finish: South Gare point

Route information

From Redcar Beacon, walk west along the Esplanade and pick up the England Coastal Path towards Warrenby and the edge of Cleveland Golf Course, where the route joins the Teesdale Way. A quiet minor road skirts around the perimeter fence of the former steelworks. The road then passes through the sand-dunes at Bran Sands and heads into the narrow spit of land separating Teesmouth from the North Sea, called the South Gare Breakwater. Entry to the lighthouse on the tip of the breakwater is not permitted but there is access to a narrow, grassy or rocky strip on the west side of the breakwater.

▼ Paddy's Hole



COATHAM HERITAGE TRAIL

2

Coatham began as a market village in the 14th Century to the smaller adjacent fishing port of Redcar but as their populations grew from the 1850s, the space between them reduced.



▲ Redcar Beach



▲ Coatham Marsh

Today Coatham is now only a mile-wide district in the town of Redcar, but boasts attractive Victorian architecture, a popular stretch of beach loved by both windsurfers, kitesurfers and Coatham Marsh nature reserve.

Highlights

1. **The Town Clock**, was conceived around the time of King Edward VII's coronation in 1902 and was built in 1912. It subsequently became a memorial clock, as the King (who was a frequent visitor to the town) died two years previously. It was funded by public subscription and built by John Dobson of Redcar, with an opening ceremony on 29 January 1913.

2. The beauty of the wild North Sea coast is complemented by Coatham's other natural

highlight – the ancient marsh and grassland of **Coatham Marsh**. This 134 acre nature reserve bordered by Redcar on two sides, the former steel works and the sea on another. Its wetland features attract a diverse and important number of birds. Its two large lakes, Round Lake and Long Lake, are fringed with phragmites, while low-lying, flood-prone Middle and West Marsh are useful areas of exposed mud for waders to feed. These last remaining wildlife habitats have survived the industrial and urban reclamation of virtually the entire South Tees estuary. Despite its industrial environs, the reserve still manages to provide a sanctuary for more than 200 species of bird and a wonderful variety of wildflowers.

Distance

2.5 miles

Estimated walk time

50 minutes

Suggested start/finish

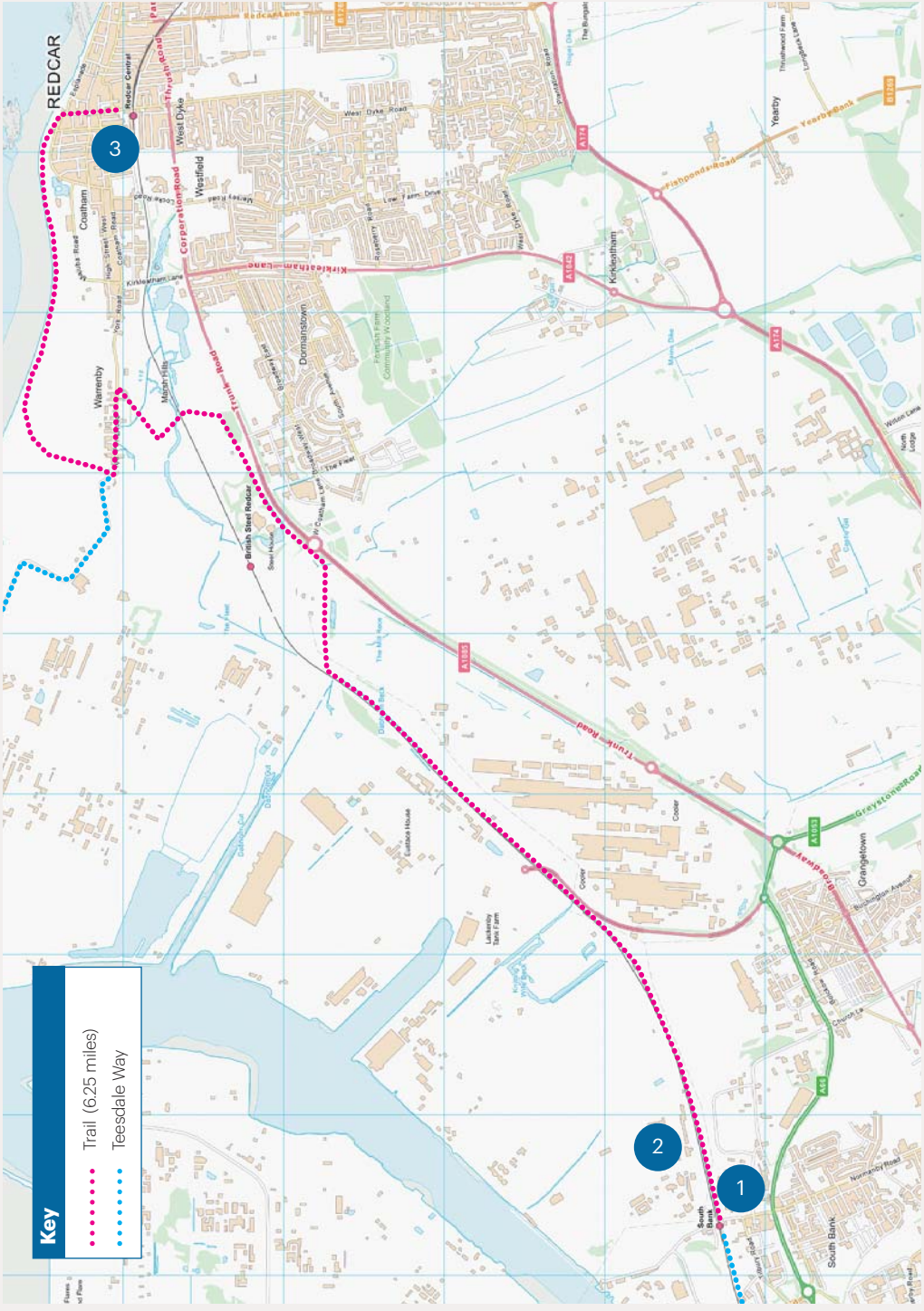
Majuba car park

Route information

From the car park at Majuba Road head past the boating lake. The route continues along Kirkleatham Lane and passes Coatham Marsh to the right. Turn left onto Corporation Road keeping Locke Park to your left. Turn north on to Locke Road then take Kirkleatham Street, Station Road, Millbank Terrace and follow the route to the Town Clock on High Street East. Complete the trail by heading north towards the Esplanade turning westwards towards the Redcar Beacon, Redcar Beach and returning to the car park.

▼ Redcar Town Clock





Key

- Trail (6.25 miles)
- Teesdale Way

3

2

1

REDCAR TO SOUTH BANK STATION RAIL TRAIL

3

The arrival of the railway in 1846 brought about great change to both Coatham and Redcar, playing a significant role in the area's industrialisation. The railways remain an important part of industry to this day.



▲ Dorman Long Coal Tower



▲ South Bank Station (present)

Coatham was chosen as the location of grand villas and townhouses built for Teesside industrialists and their families including the famous Bell family who owned the Port Clarence Ironworks.

Highlights

1. The present **South Bank Station** was opened in July 1984 by British Rail to replace a previous structure situated half-a-mile farther east that was inconveniently sited in the middle of a heavily industrialised area and in the way of a planned new dockside access road. This previous station, with its island platform was opened by the NER in 1882 to serve the growing town of South Bank and replaced the original station (initially called Eston) built in 1853 by the Middlesbrough & Redcar

Railway. Ironically, this was located on the same site as the present station.

2. **Dorman Long Coal Tower** (a coal supply bunker) is an iconic landmark adjacent to South Bank Coke Ovens.

3. **Redcar Central Station.** The Middlesbrough and Redcar Railway opened to passengers in June 1846, but was also an important goods route. The first train on the line was hauled by Stephenson's famous Locomotion No 1.

The original station had a single platform, leading to heavy congestion and delays for Victorian commuters and holiday makers during the summer months. A second platform (westbound) was introduced by LNER in 1935.

Distance
6.25 mile

Estimated walk time
2 hours

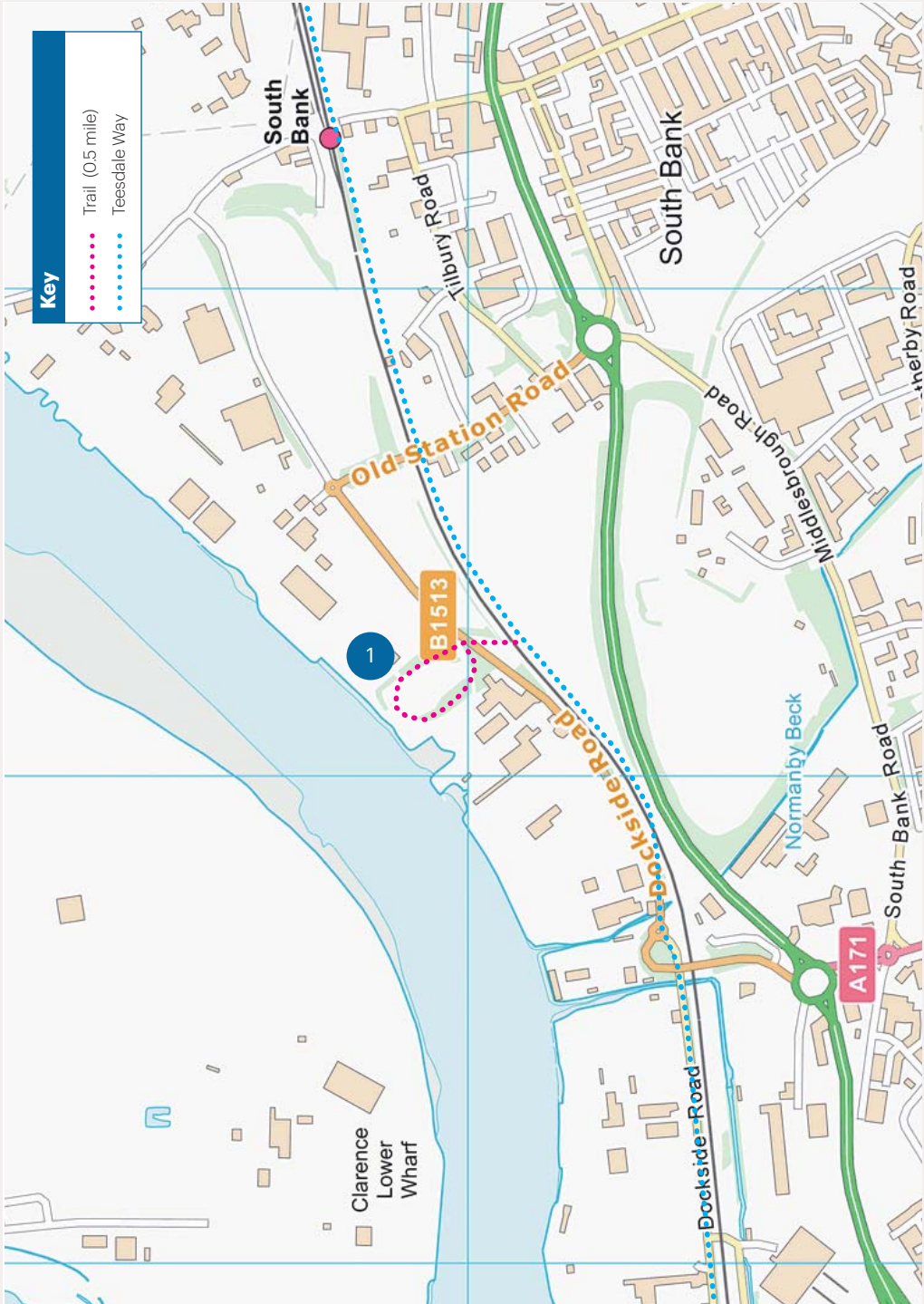
Suggested start/finish
Redcar/South Bank Station

Route information

The route forms part of the longer Teesdale Way and England Coastal Path and can be walked in either direction.

▼ Top: Redcar Central Station 1950s. Below: South Bank 2nd Station 1905





Key

- Trail (0.5 mile)
- Teesdale Way

SOUTH TEES VIEWPOINT CIRCULAR WALK

4

A reclaimed salt marsh nestled beside Teesport Commerce Park. This unsung green space commands panoramic views across the river's industrialised north bank, the mouth of the Tees and beyond.



▲ Teesport



▲ Riverside View

Though perhaps at first sight, not an obvious location to choose to celebrate, the South Tees Viewpoint is undoubtedly an impressive vantage from which to appreciate a living urban-scape in this busy post-industrial heartland. Once an expansive salt marsh, the South Tees Viewpoint could not be more different today.

Highlights

During the 18th Century the area around Cargo Fleet was known as Cleveland Port and was the point where large ships off-loaded their cargoes onto fleets of smaller vessels that would continue the journey along the River Tees to Stockton.

During the 20th Century further down river – towards

South Bank stood Smith's Dock a centre for shipbuilding on the river.

1. Today, **South Tees** Viewpoint offers one of the best views of this part of the river.

Looking west you'll see the Tees Transporter Bridge and Riverside Stadium. To the east, Teesport Commerce Park – a hub of maritime and logistics activity. A 135-acre site, it is a key location for offshore energy operations, sitting in the midst of the Tees Valley.

To the south, Eston Hills and Flatts Lane Country Park are visible with the Cleveland Hills in the far distance.

Distance

0.5 mile

Estimated walk time

10 minutes

Suggested start/finish

Teesdale Way

Route information

The route forms part of the longer Teesdale Way and England Coastal Path. The viewpoint is accessed via a footbridge across the railway line.

For such a compact urban site, there is a surprisingly rich variety of flora and fauna on show. Common grassland species and planted daffodils have naturalised around the site. The site is rich also with butterfly species and skylarks are noted on the grassed areas. Cormorants and seals are occasionally spotted in and around the river.

Please note, tethered horses may be present at this location.

WILDLIFE WATCH SKYLARK



River Tees Rediscovered

Bus times can be obtained by calling
Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visiting
www.traveline.info

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