

Discover TEESDALE



‘Dales on Rails’ Itinerary

Itinerary: 3 Scenery and Steam

Our 'Dales on Rails' itineraries include;

Itinerary 1 Dales on Rails

Take this route to combine visits to Locomotion, Cockfield Fell, the Weardale Railway. There's an opportunity for a spot of shopping and refreshments at the Durham Dales Centre in Stanhope and you will also see the Stanhope and Tyne Railway and the Waskerley Way.

Itinerary 2 Railways Great and Small

Start with morning coffee near Bowes and explore railways in and around Barnard Castle. ride on the miniature railway at Whorlton Lido and finish the day at Locomotion.

Itinerary 3 Scenery and Steam

Combine sightseeing and fine food with a spot of history and a ride on a steam train. This route takes in Teesdale and Weardale.

Itinerary 4 Trains and Castles

Start by riding the Wensleydale railway then tour Castle Bolton, Richmond Castle, Barnard Castle ending at Darlington Railway Centre and Museum to see the engine that opened the world's first passenger railway in 1825: Locomotion no. 1.

Tour itineraries are prepared for Teesdale Marketing by Jan Williams, Northumbria Blue Badge Guide. The information is correct at the time of writing. Group organisers are advised to confirm opening times and arrangements for groups with individual attractions/organisations. A free guiding service is also available (availability is limited, please check with Jan).Contact: Jan Williams Tel 0191 383 0988 Janwildurh@aol.com

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Download other itineraries from www.teesdalediscovery.com/tours.htm

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Itinerary No 3

Route Plan

Scotch Corner – A66 west – Thorpe Farm – west of Greta Bridge take right turn (brown signs for Rokeby and Egglestone Abbey) to Barnard Castle via Abbey Bridge – Barnard Castle – B6277 - Lartington – Cotherstone – Romalldkirk – Mickleton – Middleton-in-Teesdale - B6282 – Eggleston – B6278 – Stanhope – B6287 via Crawleyside – Edmundbyers – A68

Coach Timings

Scotch Corner – Barnard Castle	=	25 minutes
Barnard Castle – Middleton in Teesdale	=	25 minutes
Middleton in Teesdale – Stanhope	=	25 minutes
Stanhope – A68	=	35 minutes

Commentary

Barnard Castle has always been an important centre of communications. The Romans thought so when they surveyed a road to link their fort at Binchester (near Bishop Auckland) to the high ground of Stainmore Pass and their fort at Bowes. The line of that road lies beneath modern **Galgate** in Barnard Castle. The town's newly refurbished TIC (2004) has a selection of guidebooks and walks leaflets which will help you discover this lovely market town. Browse at your leisure over a cup of fresh coffee in the TIC's own café. Coaches may park outside the TIC on Wednesdays by arrangement (tel 01833 696356).

Eighteenth century horse drawn coaches continued to bring wealth to the little town by the River Tees. But nothing compared to the excitement of local people when the steam trains first arrived in the mid-19th century. Snaking its way westwards from Darlington the railway to Barnard Castle opened in 1856 and had its terminus in the town at Montalbo Road. Five years later the **South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway** (snappy title!) trundled its way out of the town and over Stainmore to West Cumbria.

But it is the final line out of "Barney" which this itinerary follows. The **Tees Valley Railway** steamed into operation in 1868 and brought the villages of **Lartington, Cotherstone, Romalldkirk and Mickleton** into easy reach of the large settlements further east. The beautifully constructed **Lune Viaduct** stands proudly alongside the dale road between **Mickleton and Middleton in Teesdale**. It is more than 40 years since the closure of these local lines and what once carried stone and livestock down the dale now carries the **Tees Railway Walk** (NB: this is a permissive footpath and not a public right of way).

Despite plans to run the line all the way to Alston it was in fact **Middleton in Teesdale** which became the actual terminus and the old passenger terminus is now disguised as a caravan site (catch a glimpse on the right of the road just before dropping down the hill to cross the River Tees into the town.

Don't just drive through **Middleton-in-Teesdale**. The town is well worth exploring. Local shops in this town serve the surrounding agricultural community. The village bakery and tearoom offers bakery items and preserves and an excellent TIC (check opening times) is just the place to buy those all important postcards or guidebooks. An elegant drinking fountain in the main street is a reminder of Middleton's role in the lead-mining heritage of Teesdale. The name etched into the canopy is Robert Bainbridge who was Superintendent for the London Lead Company in the mid-nineteenth century

Or take a breather at **Eggleston Hall Gardens** in the village of the same name. This is a delightful stop for the plantsman and amateur gardener. Or a peaceful venue for those who simply prefer to sit and dream in this 4 acre site. The gardens contain many rare plants and shrubs and organic fruit, vegetables and herbs. Follow the signs to find the ruined chapel tucked away in one corner and leave time for the Coach House Tearoom to satisfy any hunger pangs!

*Well, you can't think of trains **all** the time, can you....?*

The road from Eggleston village climbs over the high moor land of the North Pennine hills. Moor upon moor upon moor roll far into the distance. Patches of burnt heather show the care taken by modern land managers who maintain the moor land landscape as an important habitat for the grouse and other upland birds.

*But nowhere in this lovely area are you far
from discovering our train heritage.....*

Climb aboard the newly opened and restored **Weardale Railway** at Stanhope and take a five mile ride through the delightful countryside flanking the lovely River Wear. One hundred goods trains a week trundled their way down the dale in the late 19th century moving limestone and, eventually, passengers down the dale. Today's passengers can enjoy a steam hauled heritage service between Stanhope and Wolsingham. (Check train running times. Contact info@weardale-railway.org.uk for times/dates).

Refreshments and an opportunity for local shopping can be built into a stop at the **Durham Dales Centre** in **Stanhope** before continuing up the B6278 road north through the aptly named **Crawleyside**. As the open fell land is reached towards the top of the hill look for the clues to Crawleyside's railway heritage. A narrow grass covered track is visible running parallel to the road over to the right. This marks the route of the **Stanhope and Tyne Railway** (1834-1951) which transported lead, iron and limestone to South Shields some 37 miles away. Robert Stephenson, son of the famous railway pioneer George Stephenson, was the consultant engineer for the Stanhope line. And what a feat of engineering it was. The highest standard gauge railway line in England included a very challenging 1 in 8 incline. Stationary winding engines had to rope-haul wagons groaning under the weight of limestone up the steepest gradients in two stages.

And even then that's not the end to our discovery tour. Keep a look out for walkers striding out along the moor land ahead. They are enjoying the **Waskerley Way** a 10 mile walk which follows the original route of the western part of the Stanhope and Tyne Railway. The C2C cycle route shares the path with hikers.

*From here just enjoy the scenery through
Edmundbyers and across Derwent reservoir
en-route to the A68.*