

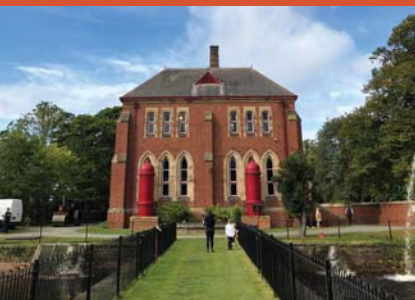
HERITAGE TRAILS GUIDE

Darlington

Guided walks through
our industrial heritage

River Tees
Rediscovered

CONTENTS



Walk 1
Piercebridge circular
Page 2



Walk 2
Broken scar circular
Page 4



Walk 3
South park, snipe house pond circular
Page 6

Walk 4
Hurworth, rockcliffe circular
Page 8

Walk 5
Hurworth, Croft and Stapleton circular
Page 8



Care to share?

Upload your pics to Instagram.
#heritagetrails

WELCOME

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!

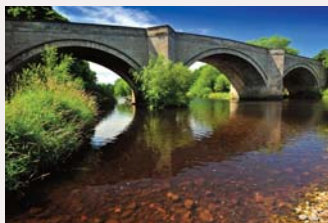
Darlington has over 300km of public rights of way, ten local nature reserves, seven formal parks, three community woodlands and numerous other open spaces to explore.

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, from Sites of Special Scientific Interest to 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 fifth century, it was sited where the York-Newstead Roman road known as Dere Street crosses the River Tees. 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.

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?

A clock in the George Hotel inspired Henry Clay Work's 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

0.62 miles (1km)

Estimated walk time

30 minutes

Grade

Easy

Suggested start/finish

Start: ???

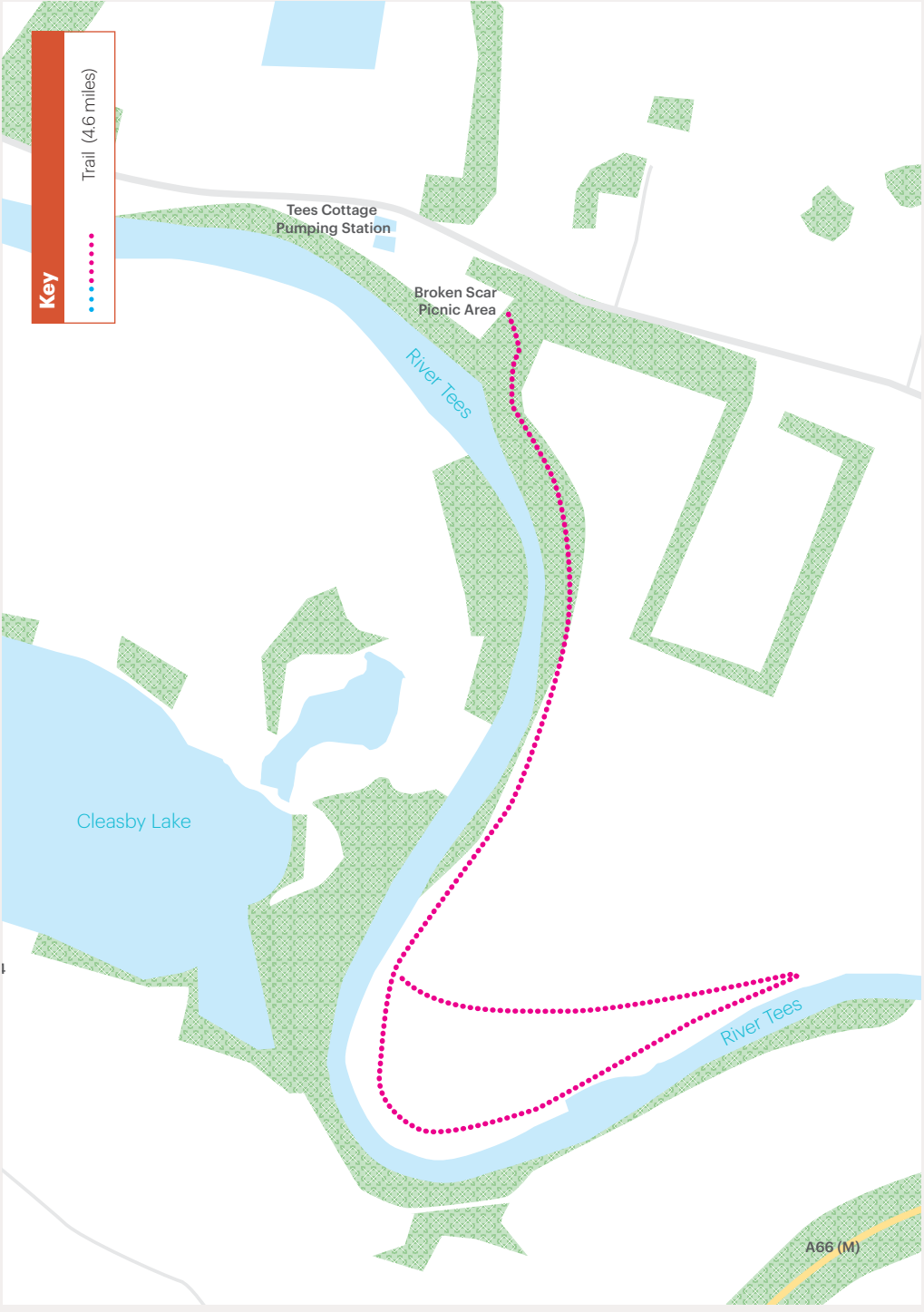
Finish: ???

Route

To add

▼ The George Coaching Inn





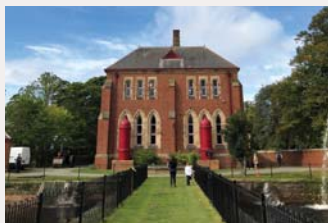
Key

Trail (4.6 miles)

BROKEN SCAR CIRCULAR

2

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



▲ Tees Cottage Pumping Station



▲ Carp fishing

Highlights

Built in 1849, The Tees Cottage Pumping Station is a Victorian waterworks, originally owned by Darlington Gas and Water Company which 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, in themselves superb examples of Victorian architecture. The engines and buildings are carefully maintained, preserved and run by volunteers, supported by the site owner, Northumbrian Water.

Broken Scar is one of Northumbrian Water's principal water treatment works, serving the population of Teesside and East Cleveland. Not only is the weir an important part of local infrastructure but it is also a much-loved scenic picnic spot for the local community!

The lake at Cleasby is 30 acres in size and has depths to 28 feet. It is an old quarry and has been in existence for over 40 years. Initially dug and formed as a result of sand and gravel extraction, quarrying finished in 2000 and the site was landscaped with broadleaf trees and the soil reseeded with various grasses. Today the site has a very natural appearance and the wildlife is thriving - visitors include deer, badgers, kingfishers, owls, swans and dragonflies.

Distance

?? miles (??/km)

Estimated walk time

? hour ? minutes

Grade

Moderate

Suggested start/finish

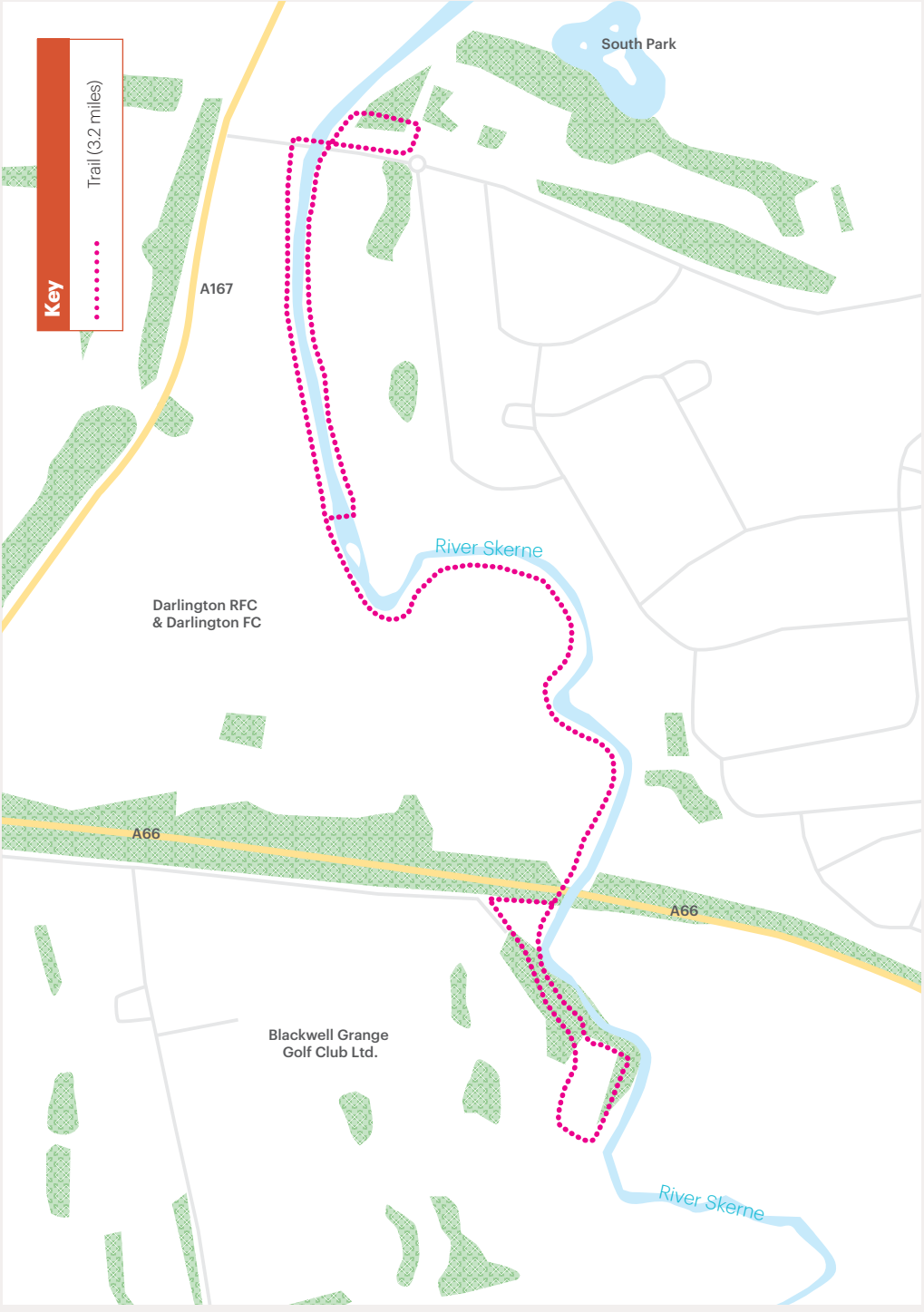
Broken Scar Picnic Area

Route

To add

▼ Broken Scar Weir





SOUTH PARK, SNIPE HOUSE POND CIRCULAR

3

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

Highlights

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,



▲ Moorhen

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

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

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

Distance

? miles (?km)

Estimated walk time

? hour ? minutes

Grade

??

Suggested start/finish

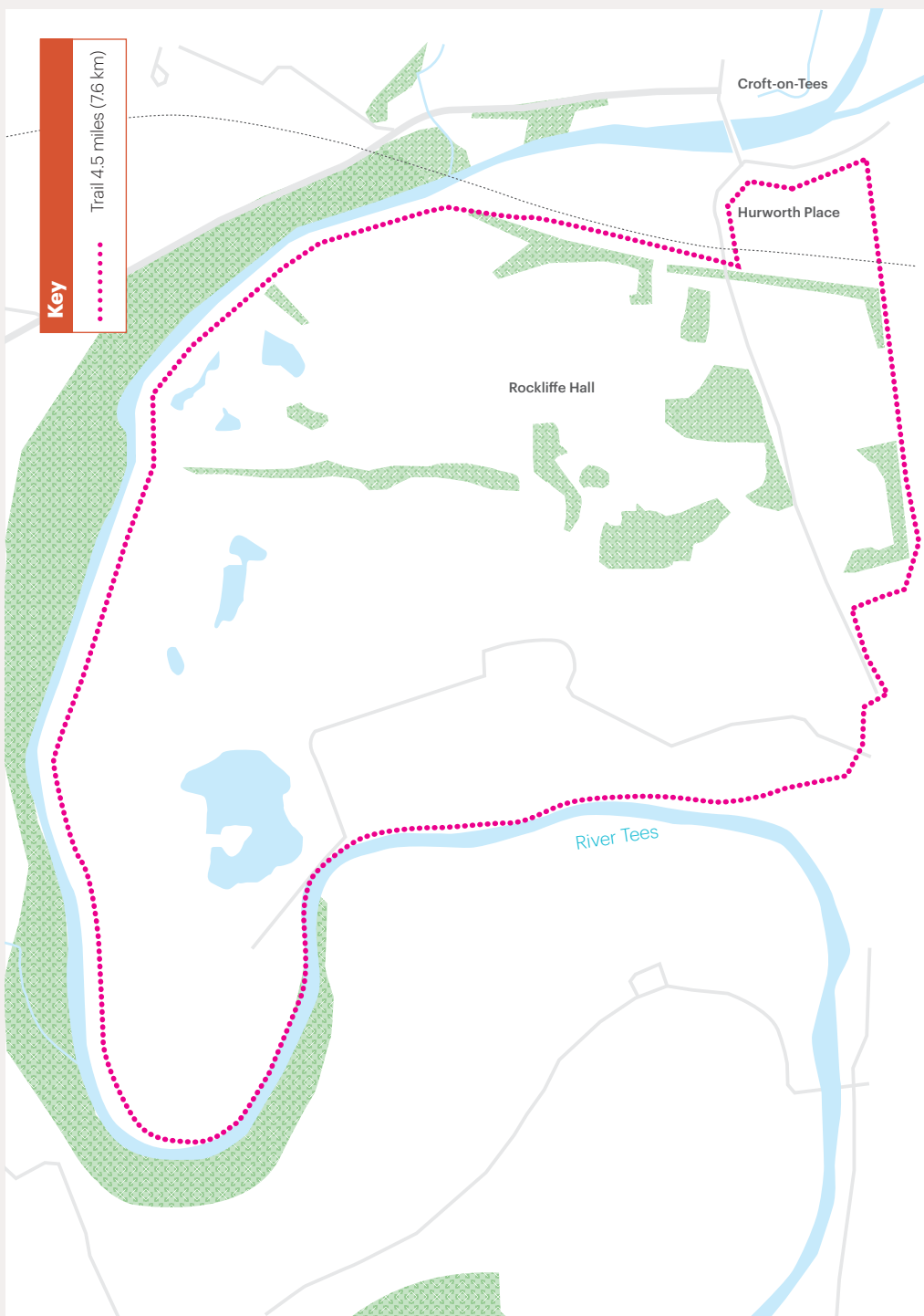
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Route

To add

▼ Barbel





HURWORTH, ROCKLIFFE CIRCULAR

4

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!



▲ Rockcliffe Hall



▲ All Saints Church

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.

Highlights

Dating back to 1774, by 1851 Rockcliffe 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 including a stint as Middlesbrough Football Club training ground! Today it is 5-star hotel with the longest golf course in Europe.

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.

There has been a church on the site of All Saints Church since the 12th century. Originally built of red sandstone, it was pulled down in the 19th 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 (7.6km)

Estimated walk time

1.5 hours

Grade

Moderate

Suggested start/finish

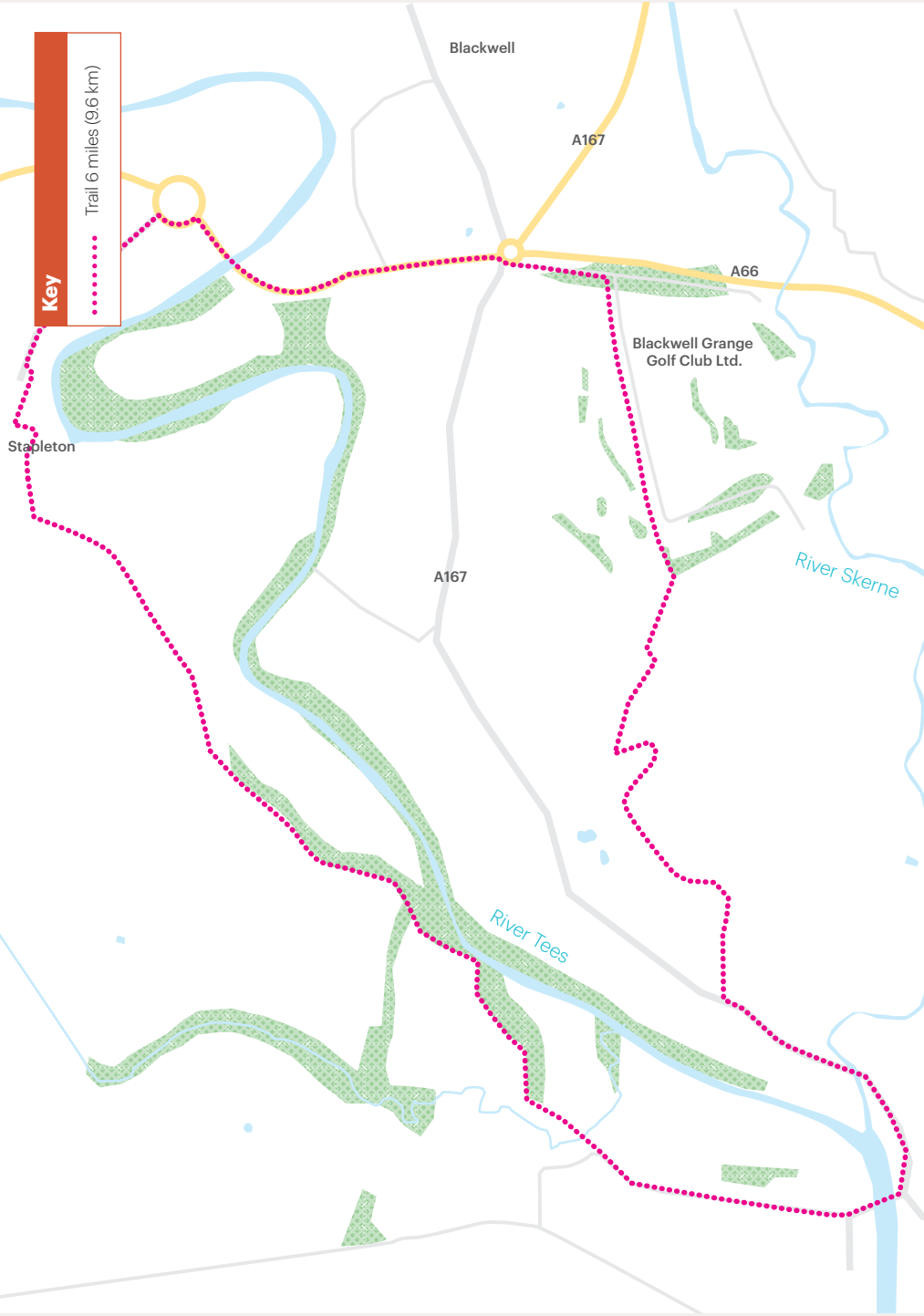
A1130 Roundabout

Route

To add

▼ Hurworth Village Green





HURWORTH, CROFT AND STAPLETON CIRCULAR

5

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



▲ Hells Kettles

Highlights

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

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

A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) Hell Kettles has been designated as such because it is the only place in Durham where there is a body of water fed by springs. There are various historical

connections and legends associated with Hells Kettles, including the possibility of it being the inspiration for the scene in 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' where she falls down a rabbit hole.

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.

[Perhaps we should say something about the wildlife and Flora and Fauna that walkers should look out for along this trail?]

Distance

6 miles (9.6km)

Estimated walk time

3 hours

Grade

Challenging

Suggested start/finish

?

Route

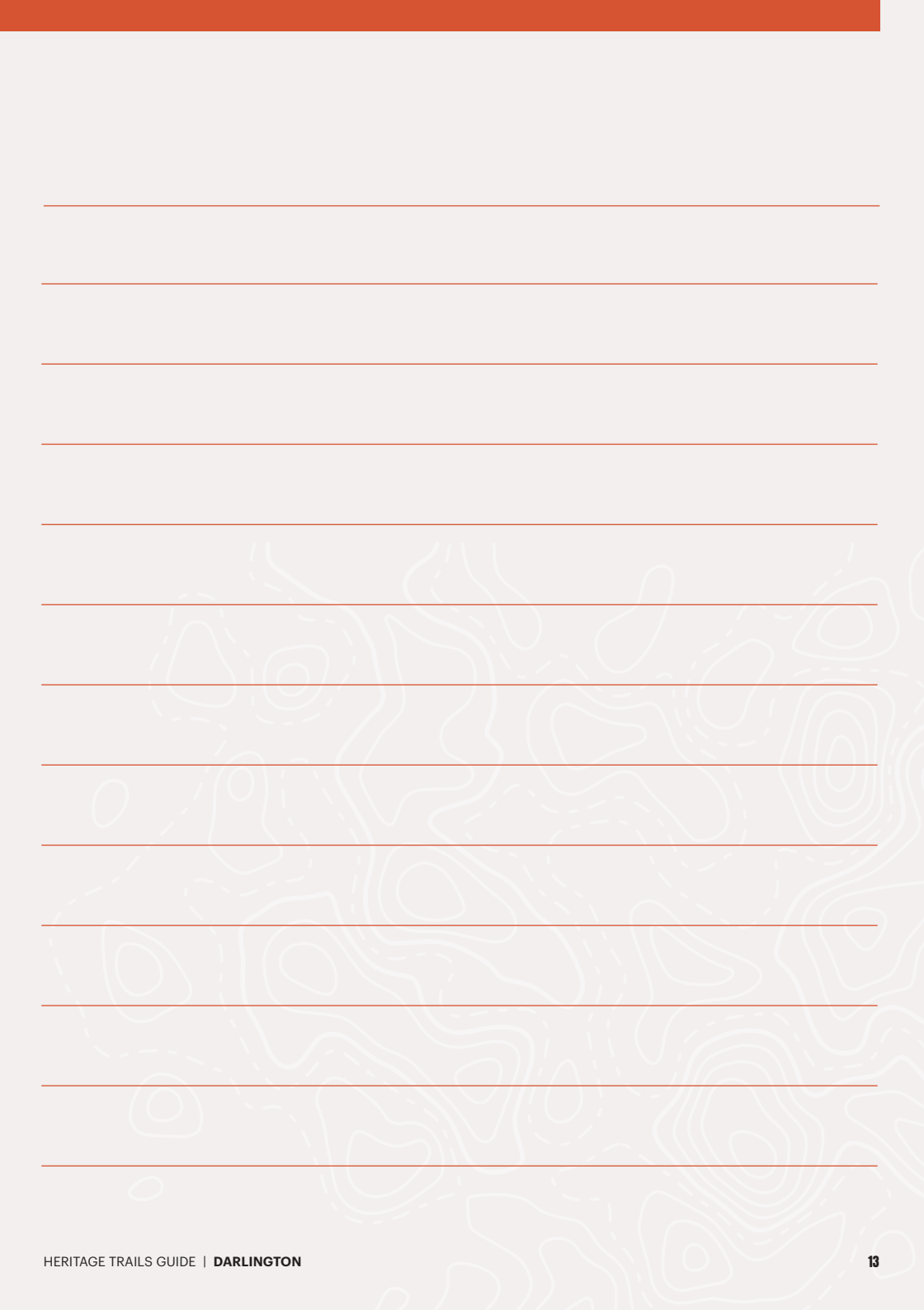
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▼ Quaking grass



NOTES

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River Tees Rediscovered

River Tees Rediscovered Landscape Partnership has been supported by funding raised by The National Lottery and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and is hosted by Groundwork NE & Cumbria.

