

# HERITAGE TRAILS GUIDE

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**Redcar**

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Guided walks through  
our industrial heritage

River Tees  
**Rediscovered** 

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## **Care to share?**

Upload your pics to Instagram.  
**#heritagetrails**

# WELCOME

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.

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; Svitzer, a tugboat company; BOC, supplying industrial gases; the huge Northumbrian Water sewage treatment works; Teesport with its cranes and warehouses; the Lackenby steel rolling mills; all are part of today's industrial Tees Valley, are visible from the Black Path.

Flora and fauna is in abundance thanks to the steel slag which makes up much of the path's foundation; from the 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**

- Trail 1 (4.7 miles)
- Trail 2 (3.2 miles)
- Trail 3 (4.1 miles)

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# 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



▲ 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 (4 km).

The Gare was constructed from January 1861 to 1884 using 5 million tonnes of blast furnace slag and 18,000 tons of cement at a total cost of £219,393.

## Highlights

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.

The area 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. Known as the German Charlies after a WW1 German ship that ran aground there..

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. At the end of the breakwater, you'll find South Gare Lighthouse, built in 1884.

Made from blast furnace slag, the land has a high limestone content which produces a base rich soil, attractive to lime-loving plants. The area's tidal mudflats, scrub, grassland, sand dunes, rocks and pools attract a very wide range of birds and you may even spot a seal or two!

## Distance

7.12 miles (11.45 km)

## Estimated walk time

1 hour 50 minutes

## Grade

Easy

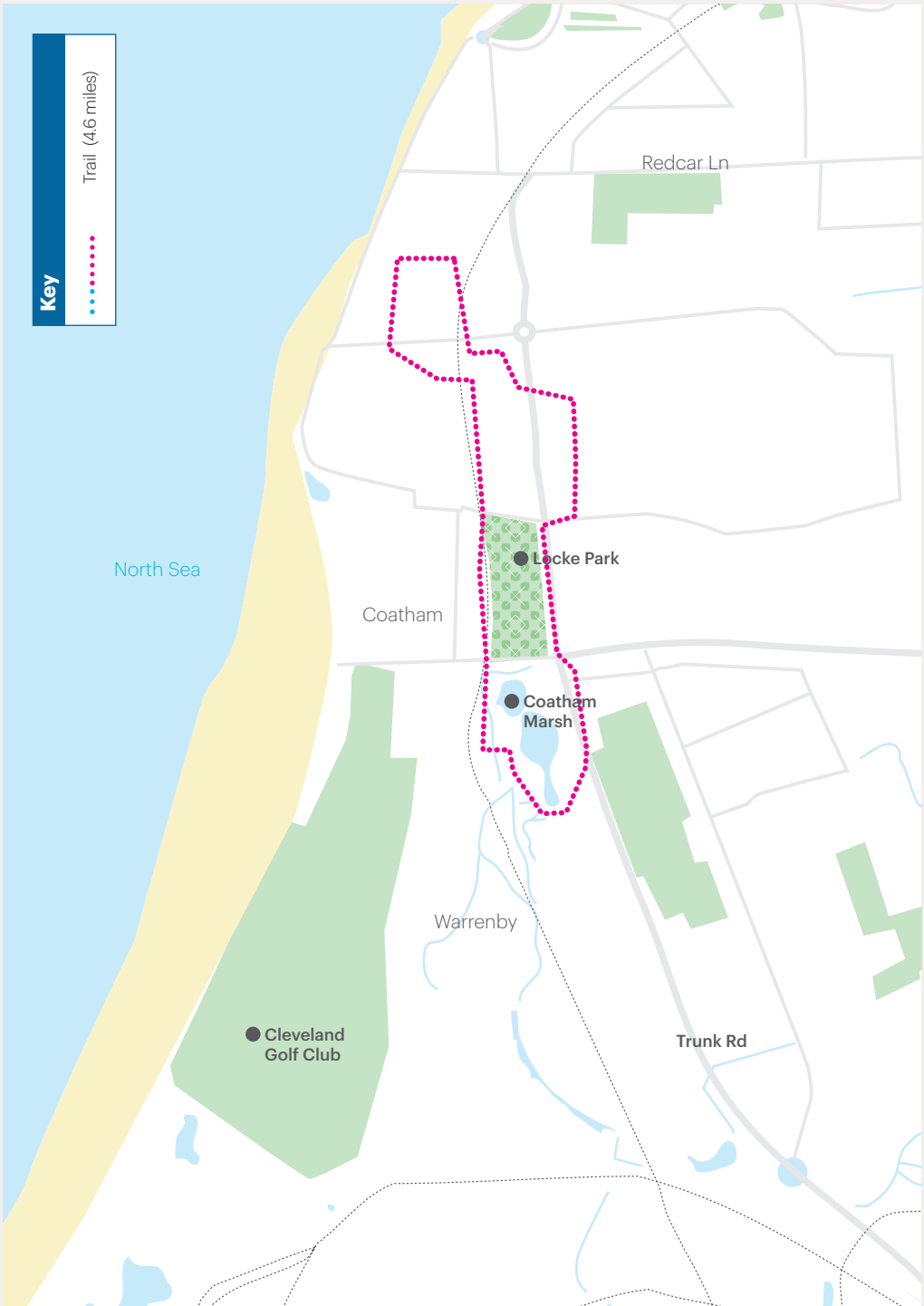
## Suggested start/finish

Start: Redcar

Finish: South Gare point

## Route

Leaving Redcar, this linear walk passes through Coatham then travels along a dismantled railway line between Warrenby and the edge of Cleveland Golf Course, from where it intersects a quiet minor road that skirts around the perimeter fence of the huge 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.



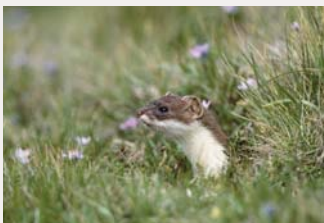
# COATHAM HERITAGE TRAIL

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



▲ Stoat

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 and kitesurfers plus the 134 acre, nature reserve known as Coatham Marsh.

## Highlights

The beauty of the wild North Sea Coast notwithstanding, Coatham's other natural highlight is the ancient marsh and grassland of Coatham Marsh - a 134 acre nature reserve bordered by Redcar on two sides, a 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.

From dense reed-beds provide nesting habitat for reed warbler, sedge warbler and grasshopper warbler to mounds colonised by grasses and wildflowers including marsh and bee orchids, yellow rattle, eyebright and knapweed. Foxes and stoats are regular visitors while birds of prey are attracted by many smaller mammals hidden in the grasslands.

## Distance

?

## Estimated walk time

?

## Grade

Moderate

## Suggested start/finish

Start: ?

Finish: ?

## Route

To add

## ▼ Coatham Marsh









# REDCAR TO SOUTH BANK STATION TRAIL

3

The Teesside Steelworks was a large expanse of steelworks that formed a continuous stretch along the south bank of the River Tees from Middlesbrough to Redcar.



▲ Redcar Steelworks

At its height there were 91 blast furnaces within a 10 mile radius of the area. By the late 1970s, there was only one left on Teesside. Opened in 1979 and located near the mouth of the River Tees close to the river's outfall into the North Sea, the Redcar blast furnace on Teesside was the second largest in Europe.

## Highlights

The present South Bank Sattion station was opened in July 1984 by British Rail to replace a previous structure situated half a mile (0.8 km) 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



▲ Reed Warbler

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.

The 1882 station was closed on the same day that its replacement opened; this survived intact but derelict for many years thereafter but has since been demolished to allow the down (eastbound) line through the site to be realigned.

[Little short on content here. We could do with some guidance]

## Distance

?

## Estimated walk time

?

## Grade

?

## Suggested start/finish

Redcar/South Bank Station

## Route

To add

▼ Grasshopper





This trail is almost identical (although a little shorter) to the previous one. Can you advise please?

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 Stainsby went out of use.

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 the local people to enjoy.



**Key**

Trail (6.2 miles)



River Tees

● View  
point

# VIEWPOINT CIRCULAR WALK

5

Nestled between the XXX and the Teesport Commerce Park, is an unsung green space which commands sweeping views across to the river's industrialised north bank across the mouth of the Tees.



▲ Common tern



▲ Knapweed

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.

## Highlights

Once an expansive salt marsh, the South Tees viewpoint could not be more different today. Looking to your right you'll see the Teesport Commerce Park - a hub of maritime and logistics activity, playing host to companies including A&P, LV Shipping, Mobile Mini and UK Docks. A 135-acre site, it is a key location for offshore energy operations, sitting in the midst of the Tees Valley energy cluster with easy access to the major UK road networks.

Further down, the view gives way to Teesmouth built on reclaimed land on the south side of the Tees estuary below Middlesbrough. The Tees Barrage separates the ports of of Stckton on Tees and Middleasbrough. The barrage crosses the River Tees just upriver of Blue House Point in the borough of Stockton-on-Tees and is used to control the flow of the river, preventing flooding and the effects of tidal change. It comprises a river barrage, road bridge, footbridge, barge lock, fish pass and white water course.

[Not entirely sure of the relevance of some of this so we could do with some guidance]

## Distance

?

## Estimated walk time

?

## Grade

?

## Suggested start/finish

?

## Getting there

?

## ▼ Goosanders



## NOTES

[illegible]

[illegible]



# River Tees Rediscovered

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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.

