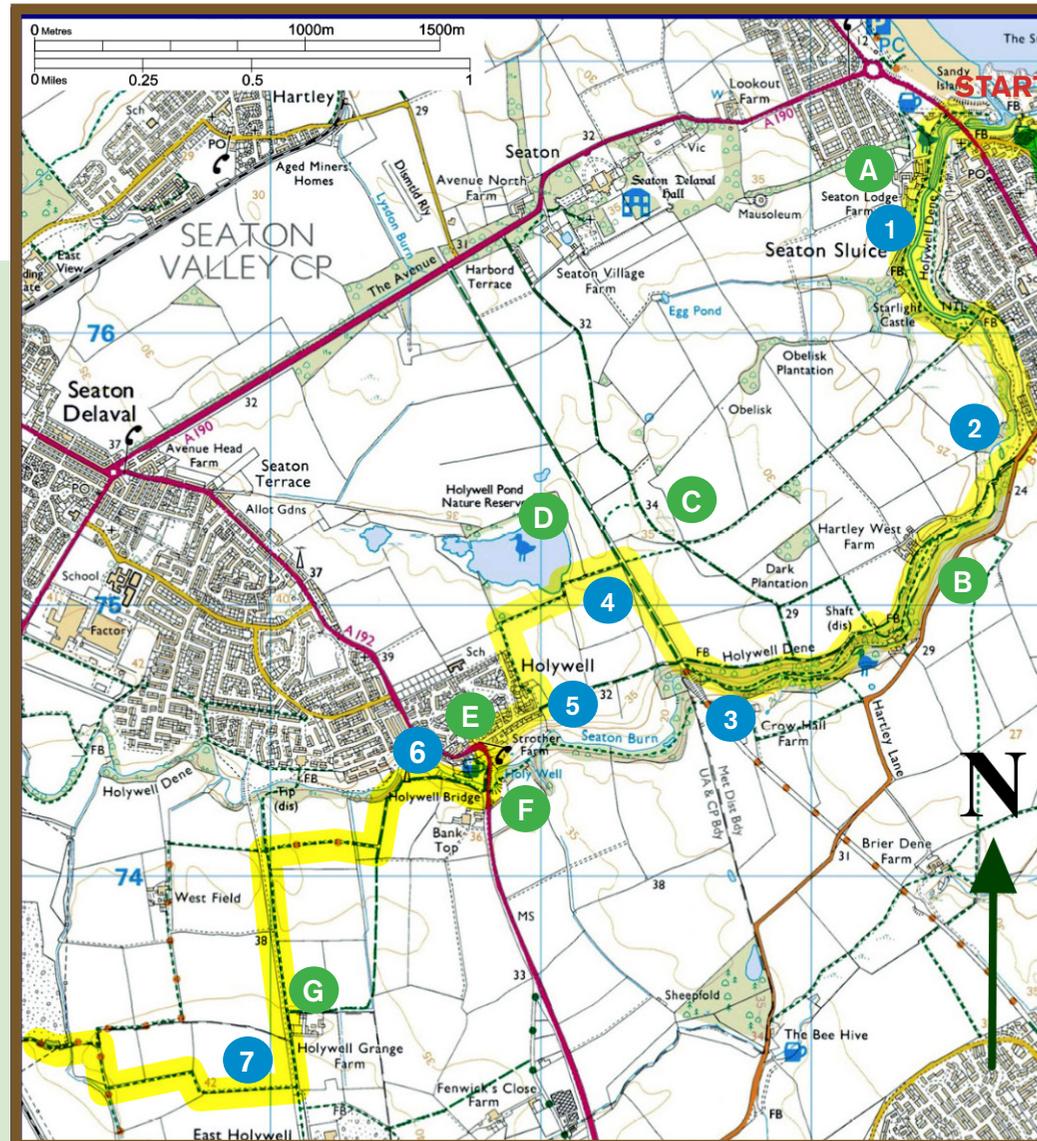


# Tyne and Wear Heritage Way

## Section 2: Seaton Sluice - Burradon (9 miles)



### The Walk: Section 2

**Start:** The footbridge over *The Cut* in Seaton Sluice (NZ 338 768)

**1** Leave the footbridge and take the first set of steps leading down to the harbour. Continue to a footbridge, cross and turn **L**, passing under the road bridge. Continue to a path, turn **L** and go straight ahead through woods, with the burn always on the left. Where a large pipe crosses the path, bear **L** to a footbridge, cross and continue with the burn now on the right.

**2** Continue past a small car park, bearing **R** to go downhill and rejoin the burn. Continue to a stile beside a road bridge.

**3** Cross the bridge and take the first stile on the **L**. Go straight ahead for over a mile with the burn again on the left until the path veers uphill to meet a waggonway. Turn **R**, pass under a bridge and go straight ahead through a cutting to reach a signposted footpath crossing the waggonway.

**4** The route turns **L** here but taking a few steps to the right gives a view of Seaton Delaval Hall and the obelisk. Return to the route and leave the waggonway by the path to the **L**. Pass Holywell Pond on your right and continue along the field boundaries to a housing estate.

**5** Pass a grassed area and bear **R** along Holywell Dene Road to reach the A192. Turn sharp **L** onto the main road and go a short distance. Cross the road and take the track on the right going down to old Holywell Bridge.

### Heritage Information

**A** Thomas Delaval built his bottle works here in 1763. All the necessary materials were found locally: sand, cheap coal, clay and kelp, with a convenient port for exporting to London. By 1777, production was 1,740,000 bottles per year. The bottles were sent to the harbour on narrow gauge railways that ran through a network of tunnels (later used as shelters during the 2nd world war). The bottle works closed in 1871.

**B** Holywell Dene is a steep-sided valley of semi-natural woodland with the Seaton Burn running through. It was first recorded in 800 AD, though it was known then as Merkel Dene. Shortly after 1066, the Dene was granted to Gilbert de Laval and became part of the Delaval Estate. Small settlements of farmers and coal workers have lived there for centuries. A lease for a watermill and windmill for grinding corn was granted in 1828 and lasted for about 150 years. Even as late as 1911, there were still 77 residents living here.

**6** From the old bridge, turn **R** and then follow the well-defined track to go up the slope. Keep following this track to Holywell Grange Farm. Go past the farm, and then after about 250 yards, take the first footpath you come to on the right.

**7** This path zigzags along field boundaries to reach a cycle track. Turn **R**, then just before the old Seghill waste tip, take the footpath on the **L**. On reaching the railway, bear **R** and continue to a sharp **L** turn through a tunnel. Continue on this path to a junction of cycle tracks\*.

**C** Seaton Delaval Hall was built between 1718 and 1728 by Sir John Vanburgh. The interior has been gutted by fires, but the impressive exterior survives. The obelisk was part of the original landscaping of the grounds.

**D** Holywell Ponds Nature Reserve belongs to Northumberland Wildlife Trust and is an important habitat for various breeding birds and numerous wintering wildfowl.

**E** Strother Farm (on the corner of the main road) has a door lintel with 1654 carved on it. The first owner was Hartley Bates, who also owned St Mary's Island. The impressive gate posts on the main road give an idea of how important the building has been. On the corner by Strother Farm is the ornate drinking fountain erected in 1901 to the memory of William Coxon and Smith Bewick, killed in the Boer War.

**F** The old bridge was built in 1700. The Holy Well that gave the village its name was thought to have been used by monks as they made the journey from Tynemouth Priory to Newsteads Abbey near Morpeth. Very little remains of it and it is on private land.

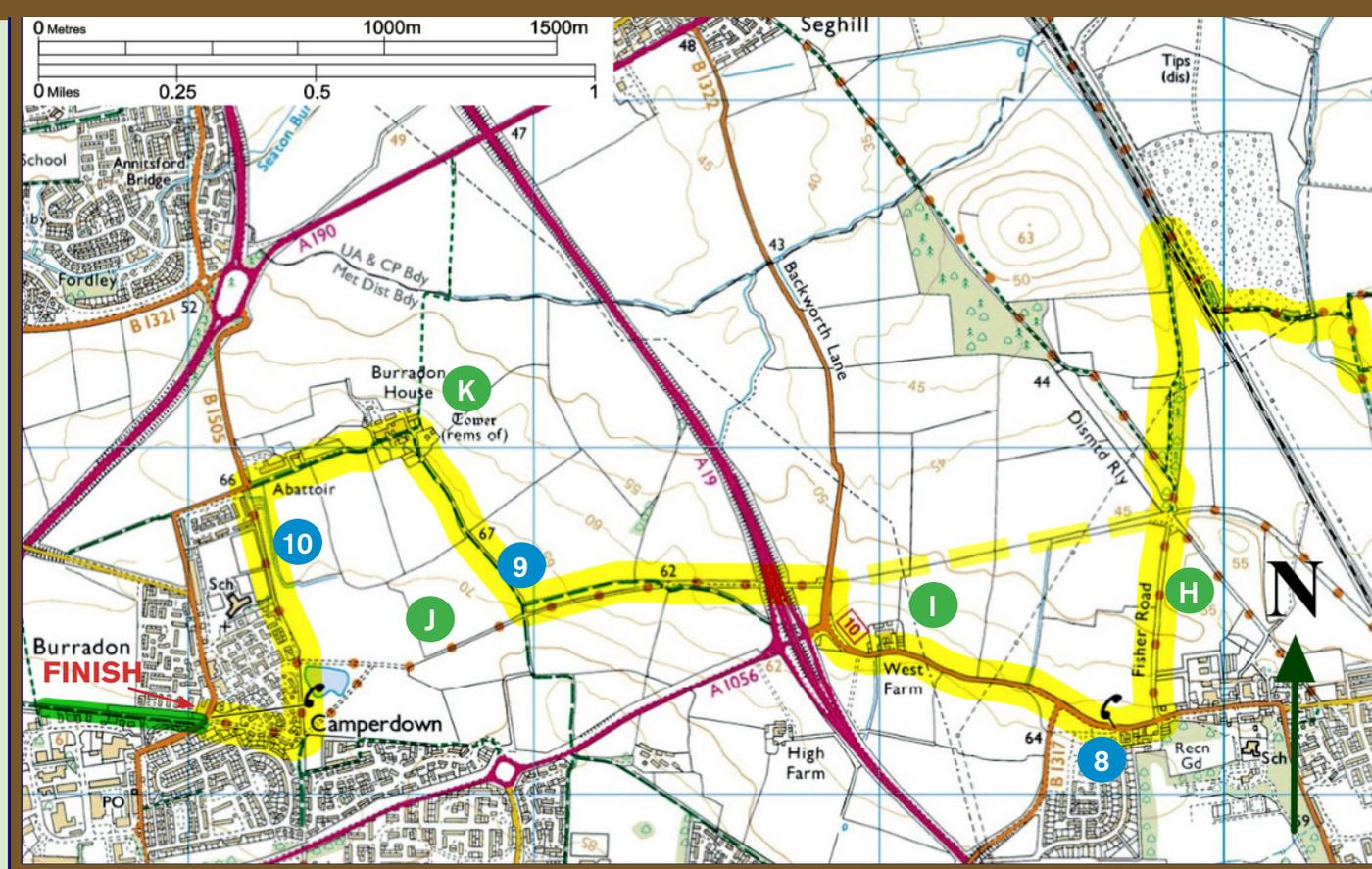
**G** The whole area around Holywell Grange Farm was an area of mining, mostly from the mid 19th century. Some distance beyond Holywell Grange Farm, the buildings of the former winding engine house and the pithead baths of Fenwick Colliery can still be seen. These are among the few such colliery buildings still undemolished.

**H** Much of the land round the Fisher Road area has been reclaimed after industrial use.

**I** The disused Burradon and Holywell Waggonway was only closed as recently as 1977, and is one of several mineral lines that transported coal to the staithes on the River Tyne and the River Blyth. The 1865 maps show Backworth C pit on the land near the A19 underpass.

**J** This is the site of the old Burradon Colliery.

**K** Burradon House was a large farmhouse with substantial barns and cottages for farm workers. Old maps also show a smithy here. Burradon tower on the left is an old pele tower, probably built in the 15th century. Pele towers were defensive, giving some protection to the Lord of the Manor in case of a raid by cattle thieves.



Go straight ahead along Fisher Road.

**8** Turn **R** onto Backworth Lane. After about half a mile, pass West Farm on your right to reach a busy road junction. Just beyond here, turn **L** onto a cycle track to go under the A19.

**9** Continue for half a mile, then turn **R** onto a track that is signposted to Burradon Tower. At the tower, turn **L** past farm buildings and continue along the farm road to the B1505.

**10** Go immediately **L** along the waggonway. Keep straight ahead, past a path coming in on the left and a small lake. When joined by a second track, take the narrow alley on the right, leading into a housing estate. It is the Reivers' Cycle Route. Follow this path through the houses until it meets with the main road through Burradon, beside the Grey Horse Inn.

*\*Negotiations are underway to open a footpath along the former Burradon and Holywell Waggonway which avoids the busy Backworth Lane.*