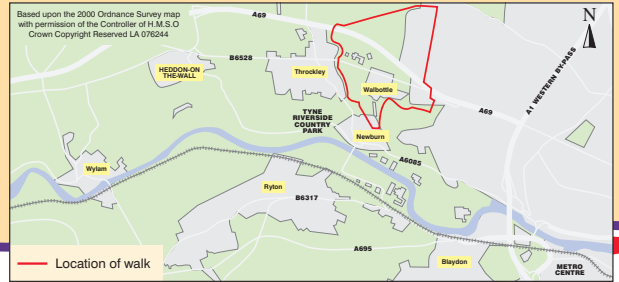


Walbottle Dene

Up to 4 1/2 miles / 7 km



This 4 1/2 miles / 7 km walk is packed with historical interest.

A 1920's garden village, a Victorian rifle range and one of the oldest waggonways in Britain are just some of the diverse delights to be discovered along the way.

The route can be joined at any point and can be followed in either direction. It is mostly accessible for wheelchairs, except the lower section of Walbottle Dene which has some steps. The river crossings in this part of the Dene can become impassable in wet weather.

Frequent bus services run to Walbottle and Throckley. Parking is possible around the green in Walbottle village.

Contact details:

Traveline
Tel: 0870 608 2608
www.traveline.org.uk

Hadrian's Wall Information Line
Tel: 01434 322002
www.hadrians-wall.org

Newcastle Tourist Information Centre
Tel: 0191 2778000

To give feedback on these & other strategic routes in and around Newcastle, please contact:

John Robertson,
Newcastle City Council
Planning & Transportation
Tel: 0191 232 8520



Layers of History

At first glance this landscape may seem unremarkable, but take a closer look and many layers of history are revealed.

Near the surface are relics of 200 years of coal mining. Many of the disused waggonways and railways which once served the coal industry have now become roads and tracks.

Delve a bit deeper - about 800 years deeper - and you discover the medieval origins of Walbottle village. Deeper still, and the landscape of the Roman occupation comes into view.

But the layers continue on down, through the Bronze Age 1000 years before the Romans arrived in Britain, to a prehistoric landscape 50 million years before humans appeared on the planet.

Follow this route and take a walk through the past.

Born from Molten Magma

Over 50 million years ago, when mammals were only just appearing on Earth, there was a period of massive volcanic activity in southwest Scotland.

Huge quantities of molten rock, or magma, welled up from the depths and squeezed through faults in the existing rock layers. The molten rock then solidified to form horizontal sills and vertical dikes.

The effects of that Scottish volcanic activity spread as far as Northumberland, and two of the dikes formed at that time now run close to Walbottle.

The Great Whin Dike crosses Fellside Lane and runs southeast towards the Tyne. It caused major problems in many Newcastle coal mines.

The Little Whin Dike runs parallel, slightly to the south, and was quarried in Walbottle Dene.

The Roman Frontier

The route of this walk straddles the course of Hadrian's Wall, the northwest frontier of the Roman Empire. It was an impressive and imposing structure, and a magnificent feat of civil engineering.

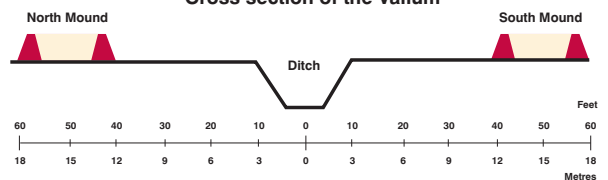
The main curtain wall stood up to 10 ft (3m) thick and 16ft (5m) high. In front, on the north side, was a deep defensive ditch. Some distance behind, to the south, ran another line of defensive earthworks including a wide flat-bottomed ditch, the Vallum. A military access road ran in the strip of land between the Wall and the Vallum, the Military Zone.

Why Blucher?

In 1815, when the Duke of Wellington faced Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in Belgium, it was General Blücher's Prussian army who saved the day. Some historians claim that without Blücher's involvement Napoleon's army would not have been routed as totally as they were.

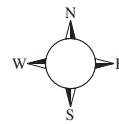
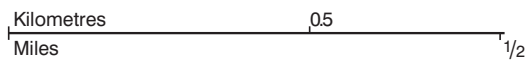
Back home in Walbottle, to mark the great victory, the local coal mine was renamed Duke Pit, after Wellington, and a new sinking was named Blücher Pit, after the Prussian. Subsequently the village of Blucher grew up around the pit.

Cross section of the Vallum



Walbottle Dene 4 1/2 miles / 7km **Suggested starting point: Walbottle Village**

Scale of map



This leaflet can be used in conjunction with Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 316 Newcastle Upon Tyne

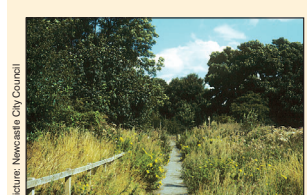
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Walbottle Dene



Path near Walbottle Dene



Walbottle Village

③ Over 250 years old, the Walbottle Moors waggonway is the only surviving 18th century waggonway in the Newcastle area. Railway pioneer George Stephenson is reputed to have worked on this line as a boy.

④ Aerial photographs have shown two rectangular Romano-British enclosures on Walbottle Moor. They were probably associated with small farmsteads.

⑤ Northumberland Gardens was built in the 1920's as a planned garden village.

⑥ The North Walbottle Waggonway carried coal from pits at Blucher and North Walbottle down to the staithes at Lemington.

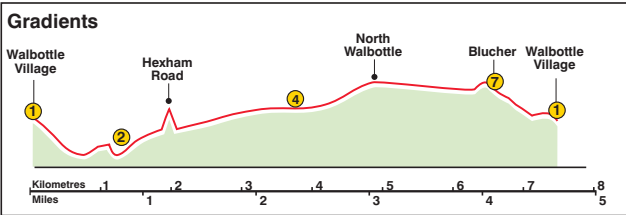
⑦ Blucher Pit closed in 1956, having worked over a period of 140 years. Some of the old pit buildings remain, including the winding engine house.

② A steep gully marks the quarried outcrop of the Little Whin Dike.



Walbottle Village

The village of Walbottle is known to have existed since at least the 13th century, and perhaps earlier. The medieval village was built round the green, and was surrounded by strip-cultivated open fields.



Key to map

- Main route
- Alternative route
- > Slope
- ⬇ Steps
- ☕ Refreshments/Pub