

SOUTH TYNEDALE RAILWAY

HERITAGE ATTRACTION

the friendly heritage railway



Our offer to groups


The South Tynedale Railway

is England's highest narrow gauge railway winding through the scenic South Tyne Valley from its home in Alston, Cumbria, into Northumberland.

The 2ft narrow gauge line runs northwards along the former Alston to Haltwhistle branch line which was closed by British Rail in 1976. Our map indicates the journey times and distances.

The South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society runs a variety of steam, diesel and electric locomotives on the line. The rolling stock includes engines from all over the world, each with a fascinating history. Alston's Jacobean station has the Crossing Café and souvenir shop and is well known for its relaxed and friendly atmosphere; a nostalgic glimpse into a bygone era.

The society of volunteers has worked tirelessly to develop the railway's offer since it re-opened in 1983, with the ultimate ambition of returning to Haltwhistle. This dream is becoming more real as funds secured by the Society see the line extension to Slaggyford completed and major improvements made to the facilities at Alston station, including a larger café, a station canopy and a second platform.

A photograph of a steam train crossing a stone bridge over a valley. The train is dark with red accents. The valley is lush with green trees and rolling hills in the background under a blue sky with light clouds.

an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The South Tyne Valley is located in the North Pennines, an Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (AONB) and now a UNESCO Global Geopark (northpenines.org.uk).

In addition to the stunning scenery, flora and fauna the railway passes close to Epiacum; a recently discovered Roman fort believed to be one of the best preserved in the Roman Empire (epiacumheritage.org). Kirkhaugh station is within walking distance - there are waymarkers to follow from the station to Epiacum and back.

A permissive footpath, part of the South Tyne trail, runs alongside the railway line, allowing visitors to explore the line and beyond by foot or by bike.

Despite having easier road access than much of the Lake District the North Pennines has fewer visitors but offers dramatic, rustic landscapes that have earned it the title, 'England's Last Wilderness,' whilst Alston is believed to have been the poet, W H Auden's, 'Great grand place.'

FACILITIES

Alston Station has a café, ticket office and souvenir shop, a Discovery Centre, accessible toilet facilities and free coach parking.*

The Crossing Café located next to the level crossing (brand new for 2017), provides good quality homemade food. Local produce are the norm and Shirley's cakes are a favourite amongst visitors and personnel alike! The menu varies throughout the season to reflect the weather and, of course, can be eaten in the cafe, in our picnic areas, or on the train. If you would like food as part of your package please contact us to discuss.

The Shop serves as both gift shop and a ticket office, open throughout the operating season. It has a wealth of offerings including books, gifts, train memorabilia and tasty local treats.

The Discovery Centre is now home to a contemporary display which tells the story of "The trials and triumphs of a rural railway". The history of the area; the rise, fall then rise again of the railway, along with the work of the South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society are presented in very accessible information along with a stunning range of photographs and artefacts.

The Accessible Toilets include a wheelchair accessible toilet and baby changing facilities. The South Tynedale Railway owns two carriages that are fully accessible for wheelchair users and one of these normally runs on all services. If you are bringing visitors who are wheelchair users then please contact us in advance to ensure that an accessible coach is running.

* There will be coach parking at Slaggyford station - please pre-book. There is also limited coach parking at Lintley Halt, where access to the platform is by way of a roughtrack - not recommended for those with buggies or in wheelchairs.

The café is accessible and the wheelchair route to the Heritage Engineering Workshop (where there is a lift to the first floor viewing gallery) is rugged but adequate



OUR OFFER

to groups

- ✓ 10% discount for pre-booked parties of 10 or more fare paying passengers.
- ✓ Free coach parking.
- ✓ Pre-order light meals or hot/cold drinks & snacks to have in the café or take aboard.
- ✓ Subject to the availability of a volunteer, tours of the signal box and heritage workshops can be arranged. Please let us know in advance if this is of interest.
- ✓ Drivers are offered a complimentary train ride, drink and a sandwich if pre-booked.



PLEASE NOTE:

The South Tynedale Railway, relying on volunteer staff for the train service, will make every effort to maintain its advertised service, but reserve the right to cancel or alter any service and accept no liability for loss, inconvenience or delay thereby caused. We operate steam, diesel and battery electric locomotives depending on volunteer availability to crew.

Please check our website for updated information: www.south-tynedale-railway.org.uk

THE LOCOS

Here are just a few of the locomotives that we have here at South Tynedale Railway

“Barber” was built by Thomas Green and Company Limited of Leeds, West Yorkshire, in 1908, works No. 441. This locomotive formerly worked at Harrogate Gas Works, Harrogate, North Yorkshire and was named “Barber” after the Chairman of the company Francis Barber. It was preserved by the Narrow Gauge Railway Society and is now owned by South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society. In 2011 the railway launched an appeal to raise £100,000 aimed at restoring this iconic locomotive back to working order and after a May Bank Holiday Gala in 2015, Barber returned to regular service at South Tynedale Railway.



Steam locomotive **“Thomas Edmondson”** arrived at the South Tynedale Railway, Alston, Cumbria in 1984. It is constructed to a standard World War I German Army design and was built in 1918 by Henschel & Sohn, of Kassel, Germany. Amazingly, it is the only one of the 95 of its class to have survived that is still in working order!

It was restored to full working order and entered service in 1987 when it was named “Thomas Edmondson” to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the invention of the traditional style railway ticket.



“No 9”: This diesel mechanical locomotive was built in 1952 by the Hunslet Engine Company of Leeds as a flameproof underground mine locomotive for the National Coal Board and supplied to Horden Colliery, County Durham. It was converted from underground to surface use at the N.C.B. Ashington Central Workshops, in Northumberland, in 1975, before returning to Horden in 1977 to shunt the surface yard. It was returned to Ashington in 1982 prior to transfer to the driver training centre at Seaham, County Durham where it was in use until it was bought by the Durham Narrow Gauge Group in 1987.

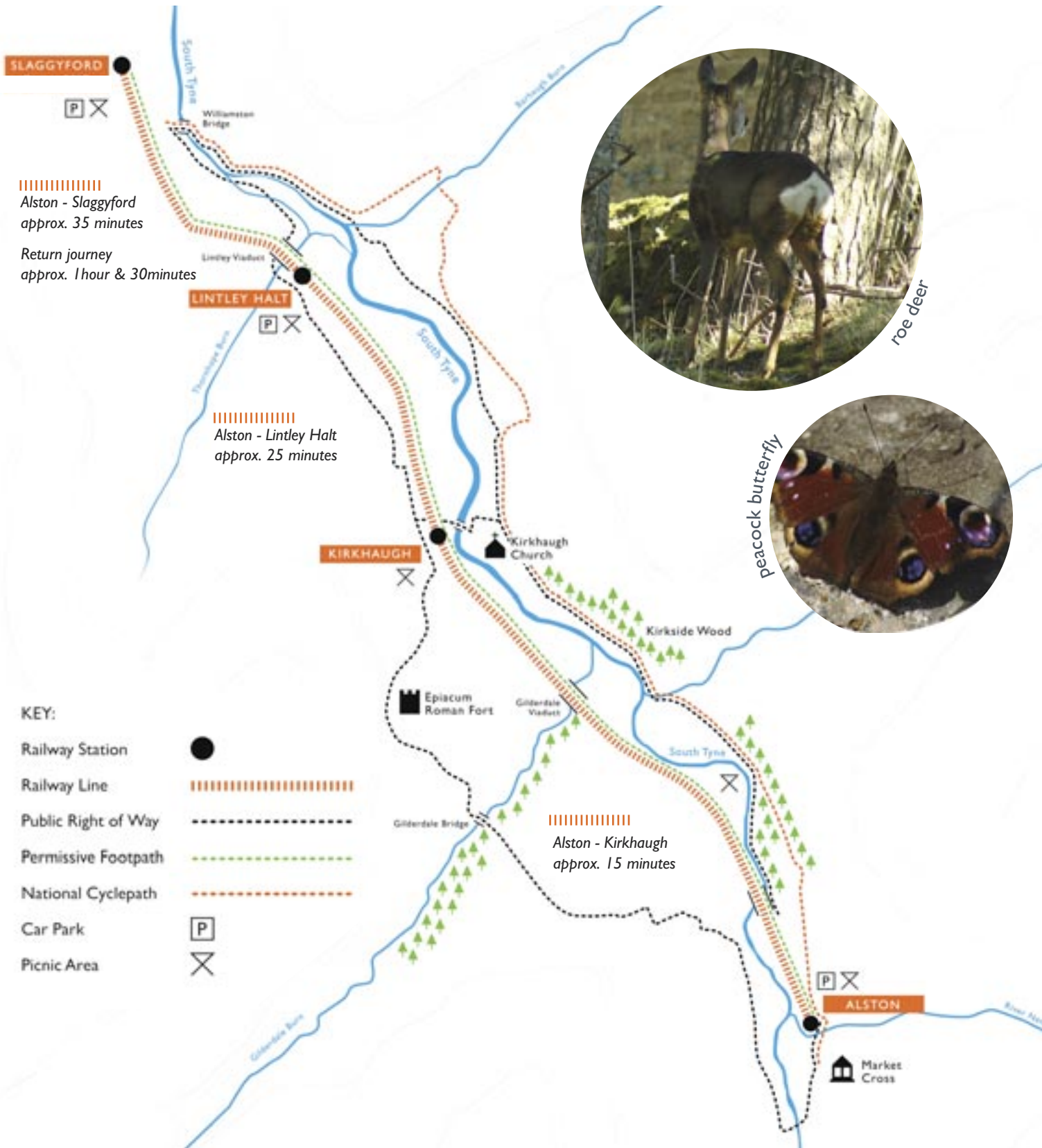


The locomotive was purchased by the South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society in 1991, and conversion work was carried out to include the modification of the air system for use in passenger service, while retaining the air driven starter motor. The footplate has been widened, a new cab built, new engine covers and drag boxes fabricated and a full mechanical overhaul was carried out.

ALL ABOARD

Take your seat and discover Alston Moor's remote wild beauty. It's time to relax and let some of the clearest air in the country present you with some of its most breathtaking views.

Look out to the magnificent rolling hills and down to the peaceful water's edge. Every square metre is teeming with life - from arctic flowers to native woodland, to leaping Roe deer and circling birds of prey.



An area's flora, and to some extent fauna, is directly related to its geology. Here Alston Moor excels in the variety of different geological habitats found in such a small area; from the upland blanket bog, the heather-clad grouse moors, the high limestone escarpments to the lowland meadows and woods, in addition to the mineral rich remains of the lead mines and the river banks washed by the water flowing from them.

The railway line does not cover all the habitats of Alston Moor, but a wide range of plants can be found throughout the year. Many can be seen from the train, but others can only be identified close up from The South Tyne Trail running alongside. Weedkiller is applied to the line itself. This is a safety requirement for all railways, but it also removes competition from coarser undergrowth, allowing more fragile species to grow. Likewise, banksides are burnt off, and verges cut, again encouraging flowering plants. Between 150 and 200 species of flower, grass, bush and tree have been positively identified within the boundaries of the railway, and the list is being added to all the time.

The high moors are home to the red grouse, with black grouse to be seen near Lintley. Buzzards, owls curlew and lapwing are among the varied bird population and you may well see red squirrel, hares and roe deer close to the track.

Please do keep an eye out for the beautiful wildlife that we are so lucky to have in this area. It's amazing how a red squirrel or hare sighting can make your day!



early purple orchid



wood anemone



coltsfoot



oyster catchers



aspen

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

Attractions in Alston

Alston is the highest market town in England and boasts a scenic cobbled front street and market cross, just 5 minutes walk uphill from the station. Some of the side streets are also of interest with traditional outside steps and stone slated cottages evocative of times past - so little has changed in over 200 years that it is often used as a period film location.

There are quite a few small independent shops such as an artisan bakery, a wholefood shop selling local cheeses and delicacies including Cumberland mustard, a butcher with award winning sausages, an outdoor clothing outlet and several craft shops.

In "The Hub" transport and local heritage museum, located close to the station, are vintage bicycles, motorbikes and cars plus information on the history of Alston and its mining heritage.

Attractions within 20 miles:

Killhope Lead Mining Museum: 7.5 miles.
Tours must be booked in advance,
coach parking available.

High Force waterfall: 17 miles.
Coach parking available

Vindolanda, Hadrian's Wall: 20 miles.
Coach parking available

Distance from:

Penrith: 21 miles (approx 35 mins)

Hexham: 22 miles (approx 35 mins)

Gilsland Spa: 18 miles (approx 40 mins)

Carlisle: 29 miles (approx 45 mins)

Barnard Castle: 32 miles (approx 1 hr)

Newcastle: 45 miles (approx 1 hr)

Keswick/Ullswater: 36 miles (approx 1hr)

Appleby: 38 miles (approx 1hr)

Durham City: 42 miles (approx 1hr 15mins)

Bowness/Windermere: 47 miles (approx 1hr 20mins)

Glasgow: 122 miles (approx 2hr 10mins)

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01434 382828 (Talking Timetable)

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See us on



Facebook



Twitter



Trip Advisor

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

Please confirm group numbers fourteen days prior to visit

Adult supervision for minors is to be provided by the tour operator/group organiser

The tour operator/group organiser will be responsible for any loss or damage to the carriages or to the company by any member of the party.