

Key points of interest

A) The Former Silksworth Colliery

Sinking of the shaft began in August 1869 and the ensuing mining of the coal gave the village its reason for being for 102 years. Often the claim was made that everyone's dad worked at the pit!

B) Silksworth Lakes

Not long after the pit closure, work began to transform the site into a huge sporting and woodland area, complete with an artificial ski slope, two lakes, walkways and children's playing areas.

C) Hetton Colliery Railway Line

From the early 1820's this unique, highly-recognised and hugely applauded engineering feat, the work of George and Robert Stephenson, carried coals from three Hetton collieries to the River Wear for nearly 140 years.

D) Doxford House Park

Sited on the former gardens of the Doxford family home, it is full of horticultural gems of early 20th century landscaping, including a man-made water cascade in romantic Renaissance style.

E) Old Silksworth

This part of Silksworth has ancient roots. The name, Silksworth has a twofold meaning. Firstly, "Sigelac", the head of an Anglo Saxon family and then, "worth" which is Old English for a homestead. Hence "Sigelacs worth"! The village centred on what is now Warden Law Lane.

F) Silksworth House

Built in 1750 by William Johnson, this property was home to the famous Doxford shipbuilding family. The grade II listed building, is undergoing much needed restoration by a local resident.

G) Silksworth Cottage

Silksworth Cottage is a grade II listed building set in a large garden just off Warden Law Lane. Built in around 1800, in stone rubble with a Welsh slate roof, it functioned as a farm house.

H) Silksworth School

Built in the 1850's, originally as a Church for local landowners and farmers, it was used as such until the Parish Church of St Matthew came into being 20 years later. Its new use was as a school and hundreds of children from the surrounding area were educated in the two classrooms.

I) St Matthew's Church

Consecrated in 1872, just before the new colliery was bringing its first coals to the surface. Along with other Churches, it helped to shape the spiritual life of the fast growing community.

J) The Silksworth Colliery Evictions

The miners went on strike in the early 1890's over a Union membership dispute. As a result some miners' families in the Quarry/Robert Street locality were forced from their homes by bailiffs employed by Lord Londonderry, the colliery owner.

K) Blind Lane

From its earliest coalmining days, Blind Lane has been New Silksworth's main thoroughfare and location of most of its shops. Many shops have long since gone, including the well patronised branch of the Ryhope and Silksworth Provident & Industrial Society, Walter Wilson's, Moore's and Duncan's.

Heritage Trails West Area

Walk 13

Silksworth Circular

Walk Distance & Time:

4.1 miles or 6.6km

2 hour (approx)

Start and Finish Point:

Silksworth Community Pool, Tennis and Wellness Centre

Facilities & Accessibility:

Toilets: Silksworth Community Pool, Tennis and Wellness Centre

Catering: Silksworth Community Pool, Tennis and Wellness Centre

Parking: Silksworth Community Pool, Tennis and Wellness Centre

Accessibility: Not suitable for disabled access

This walk was produced with the kind support of the Silksworth Heritage Group

Heritage Trails West Area

Walk 13

Silksworth Circular

Walk Directions

Take the path to the left of the Tennis and Wellness Centre entrance, passing the children's play area on the left.

Follow the tarmac path up the bank, passing the football pitches and wheeled sport park on the right.

Cut through the car park keeping the ski slope on the left. This is the former site of Silksworth colliery.

Take the second path on the right.

At the junction turn right down the bank.

At the bottom of the bank take the path to the left that follows the outer edge of the lake until reaching the road (North Moor Lane).

Cross the road at the traffic island.

Turn right and take the first left onto the tarmac path, then first left onto the old Hetton Colliery Railway line. Follow this all the way to Silksworth Road.

At Silksworth Road turn left and continue forward, crossing the road into Doxford Park on the right.

Enter the park, take the first left and then left again following the path with the walled kitchen garden to the right and the road to the left.

Cross the stream and follow the path to the right, passing the ponds.

Take the path to the left of the footbridge. At the end of this path turn right to access amenities at Doxford Park shopping centre if needed. Otherwise turn left again onto Warden Law Lane, passing Silksworth House, Silksworth Cottage and the former school house on the left.

At the end of Warden Law Lane turn right and head up the bank back towards New Silksworth, passing St Mathew's Church on the right. Continue on, passing the Golden Fleece pub on the right.

Take the first right immediately after the road crossing.

Turn left onto Londonderry Street.



The streets to the right, Quarry Street, Robert Street, Lord Street were at the centre of the eviction row in 1892.

At the bottom of Londonderry Street, turn left towards the traffic lights. Cross at the lights onto Blind Lane, keeping to the right side of the street.

The Miners Welfare Hall is on the right followed by a blue plaque for “the store”.

Continue passing Silksworth Park and council houses dating from the First World War.

Turn right just before the Colliery Tavern Inn and stay on this path until the sign for the Sunderland Tennis Centre appears on the left. Follow this sign back to the car park.