

Getting to us

Temple Newsam is situated just under four miles east of Leeds city centre, off the M1 at junction 46 (north and south). There is paid onsite parking available in the patrolled house car park.

The 19 and 19A buses run to Whitkirk, one mile from Temple Newsam House with off-road pathways available for most of the way from Colton Road. There is a full menu at Temple Newsam Tea Rooms in the Stable Courtyard which also has toilet and disabled toilet facilities.

Temple Newsam

You can explore the estate grounds and features, visit Home Farm which is part of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust — or visit the grand House, which is one of the finest country houses in Britain.

Mining Trails Map & Leaflet

BLOT on the Landscape



Edwin Spurr aged 14, a Temple Newsam miner. Taken in 1914.

Opening times, prices & booking

There is an admission charge to enter the house or farm. Please check for house opening times before travelling as these vary throughout the year.

Check the website for up-to-date prices and to book:
templenewsam.leeds.gov.uk or call: 0113 376 0318.

Temple Newsam Road, Leeds LS15 0AE



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

TEMPLE NEWSAM

A walk through the
history of coal mining
on a country estate

This leaflet tells you about a new trail based on the estate's extensive coal mining history.

Information points are indicated by waymarked and numbered signs around the trails.

In 2019 a community-supported exhibition was opened at Temple Newsam House, revealing the almost forgotten history of coal mining on the Temple Newsam estate.

The exhibition was called “Blot on the Landscape.”

The whole trail is 5.27 miles long, but can be explored in shorter circuits of 3.84 miles, 2.16 and 1.52 miles. The route follows the existing permissive paths, some of which are “off-road”, with steeper inclines and areas liable to be muddy or wet year round. All the trails start at the top of the lawn in front of the house. We hope you enjoy your walk and the information we've provided.

The Blot on the Landscape team won the 2018 National Marsh Trust Award for Volunteers for Museum Learning.

Coal mining was a dangerous occupation, with deaths and serious injuries commonplace. A banner commemorating those who died due to coal mining on the Temple Newsam estate is situated in the Lady Isabella suite off the Stable Courtyard. It lists the names, dates and the reason for each death. We appreciate that this list may not be comprehensive.

Researched and written by The Blot Volunteer Team, Leeds Parks and Countryside and Museums and Galleries Departments.

Coal mining at Temple Newsam

Coal extraction at Temple Newsam probably began with bell pits being dug in and around the park before the 17th century. There were also deep mines at Halton village, then part of the estate in the following decades.

In 1815 William Fenton contracted with the landowners—the Ingram family—to sink a deep mine on the estate at nearby Thorpe Stapleton. Named Waterloo Colliery to commemorate the famous battle of that year and with several pits, it produced coal for its owners for over 150 years.



View of the open cast 1982 by kind permission of Leeds Libraries, www.leodis.net



Temple Pit winding gear by kind permission of Doug Laycock

William Fenton had a village built for his workers between the River Aire and the canal, near present-day Skelton Lake. Waterloo Village existed for about 60 years. Nothing visible remains today.

Extensive open cast mining at Temple Newsam began in May 1942 when the wartime ‘coal crisis’ prompted the government to adopt faster and cheaper methods of extracting coal.

Deep coal mining on the estate ended with the closure of Temple Pit—part of the Waterloo Main Colliery (the closest pit to Temple Newsam House) in 1968.

Open cast working continued until 1987. Open-cast mining removes soil, features, streams, trees and wildlife. The science of reclamation was not well understood in the 1940's and work at Temple Newsam was basic.

Once an area of land had been mined, the waste from the next open cast section was used to fill in the hole. This often left badly drained, depleted soil to be slowly healed by nature. But nature is patient and wildlife has returned. Skylarks still sing on Dunstan Hills.



Temple Pit Coal Preparation Plant by kind permission of Roger Monk

Mining Trails Map

Key

1—13 Points of interest

● Longer route

● Shortcuts

🗨 View point

● Park land

Point 1: The start of the trails is the front of Temple Newsam House. Some of the paths are on tarmac—others are rougher and some areas can be muddy and steep. If you feel fit and adventurous you can do the whole route. Some people may want a shorter walk and you can choose different options.

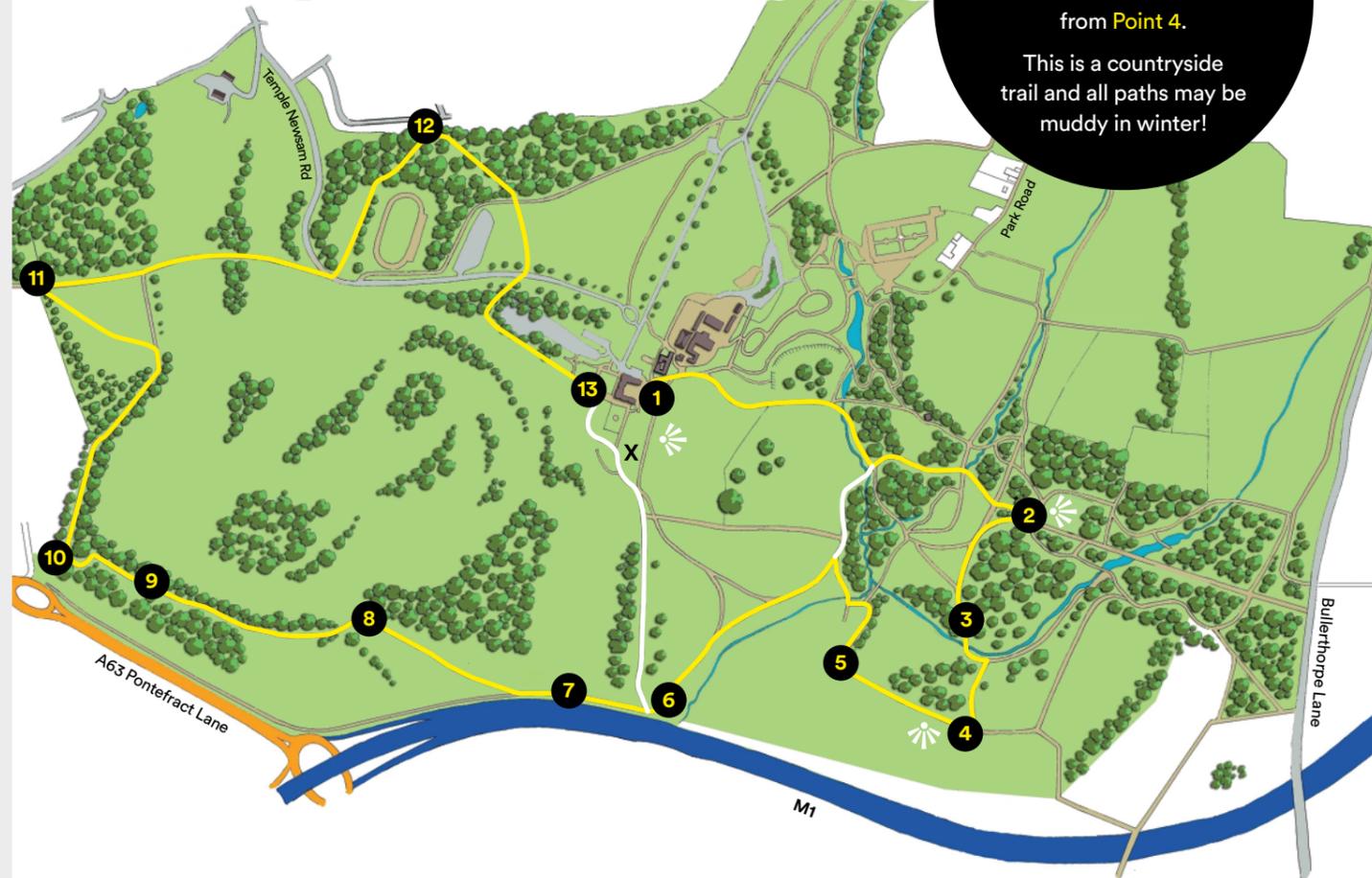
The surfaces around point 3 are the most challenging as the track drops downhill into a stream bed with a little bridge then up steep steps on the other side. It is not suitable for wheelchair users.

Point 2: Crown holes, like sinkholes, are large holes which open up in the ground. Near here is the site of a crown hole, created by collapsed underground mining works. More commonly recognised “sinkholes” occur naturally, usually the result of water eroding limestone and creating large underground voids. There’s no sign of this crown hole now as it was filled with 500 tonnes of concrete (20 lorry loads). A witness to its creation described how a tree, about 60 years old, partially sank into the hole!

Point 3: Temple Pit was the last to be worked on the estate, closing in 1968. It was also the last site of the Waterloo Main Colliery. It consisted of a deep mine and a drift mine, the latter enabling miners and pit ponies to walk to the workings down a sloping tunnel. Most coal was transported from site by way of a dedicated railway line called the “Paddy Train”. The site is now totally overgrown following opencast mining and relandscaping.

Point 4: Park Pit was located where a ‘Park and Ride’ facility is sited now. From the vantage point near the Sunnyside Walk sign, the M1 is visible. The Park and Ride is very close to the junction (45) looking south, and to the left of the large wind turbine and white dome. Park Pit (part of the original Waterloo Main Colliery) was one of several pits located near Thorpe Stapleton Hall that, in the 1800’s, was on the Temple Newsam estate. Sadly, nothing remains of either today.

Point 5: The Screens Building for Temple pit was located here. This is where the coal was sorted from waste rock and debris. The plant was effectively a series of very large sieves that sorted the coal into different sizes that were then loaded into railway wagons on the colliery’s own private railway.



Point 8: To the north of here across the golf course is a wooded area called Beech Wood where, in May 1942, the first open cast coal site on the estate was opened. In December this was expanded to take in the two municipal golf courses. It closed after two years but was left derelict for some time. A succession of open-cast sites on the estate continued to transform the landscape until the 1980’s.

Point 9: Bell Wood is believed to be named after an ancient method of mining which created a “Bell Pit”. The technique was to dig a simple shaft down to the coal seam which would then be widened to exploit the coal deposits. The shafts ended up bell shaped. When this became unsafe the mine was abandoned and another shaft would be sunk into the seam. Many bell pits would have been dug in and around this woodland.

Point 10: Park Pit was sunk in 1857 and located the other side of the Bell Wood roundabout near the Park and Ride facility. Park Pit was closed in 1927 (see also info point 4).

Point 11: Nursery Pit lay west of Temple Newsam House and was sited near Nursery Wood. It is now an Industrial estate. There is no trace of the Pit but you can imagine the weary coal stained faces of the miners. **Caution** – please take care in crossing the golf fairways, which are in regular use.

Point 12: Halton Colliery, which operated from 1925, was about 100 metres north of here. It would have lain between the modern Temple Avenue and Templegate Avenue. There was a site hut, service road and two shafts to the east of the site with a pit hill in the centre. An earlier 17th century Halton Colliery was sited behind the present row of shops and flats on Irwin Approach and the field between Temple Newsam Road and Grove Road.

Point 6: Sir Lindsay Parkinson’s operations centre for open cast works (offices and lorry depot) were based here. Parkinsons were a civil engineering company that expanded into open cast mining. This road separated the offices (the wood on the right when facing the M1) and the depot (the field on the left).

The offices were Nissen hut type buildings. They contained a typing pool, a cost office, accounts, a canteen and office for senior managers and directors. The depot contained a large metallic building for the repair and maintenance of road rollers, motorgraders, front loaders, site dumpers, dump trucks, and bucket wheel excavators plus fuel pumps dispensing diesel and petrol.



Temple Pit Screens by kind permission of Don Townsley

Point 7: The colliery railway ran along here (east/west) on the other side of Pontefract Lane. It carried the “Paddy Train”, which transported both colliery workers (until 1959) and coal. It ran from Temple Pit to two coal staithes – at the junction of Easy Road and Cross Green Lane and Halton Moor Road. At these, coal was unloaded so merchants could collect and distribute it to local households and businesses. The train last ran in 1968.

Point 13: The interpretation board here about ‘the Old Walk’ includes information and some images describing the opencast coal mining that destroyed much of the “Capability” Brown landscape to the south of the house from the 1940’s to the 1980’s.

Memorial bench. Just off the trails, marked with an ‘X’ on the map.

James (Jimi) Hesleden OBE was a miner at Waterloo Main Colliery on the estate. When he was made redundant he became an entrepreneur, making his fortune with the “Hesco Bastion” barrier, a wire cage containing sand, earth and rubble. These were used internationally for flood and military defences. In 2009 he bought Segway Inc, the makers of the personal transport system. Sadly Jimi died in 2010, following an accident.