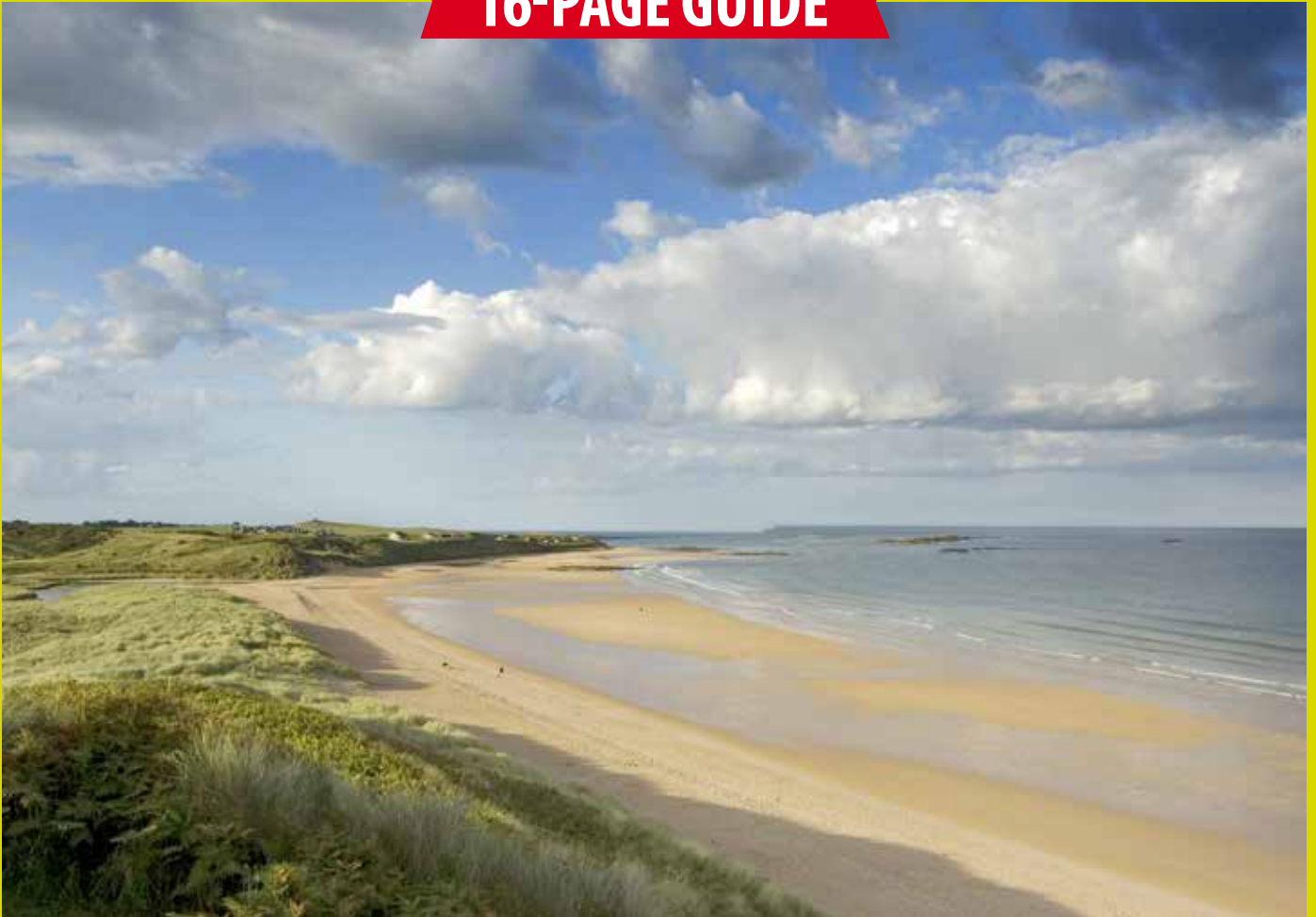


Why visit NORTHUMBERLAND

16-PAGE GUIDE



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Ancient worlds

The past casts a powerful shadow over England's most turbulent county

Few counties have had such a tumultuous past as Northumberland and it boasts an extremely rich heritage. Structures indicate the region was inhabited during the Stone Age and artefacts from the Bronze and Iron Ages have also been found. The Romans left a more obvious mark in Hadrian's Wall but it was Anglian invaders that led to the creation of Northumbria.

The kingdoms of Bernica and Deira became one under Æthelfrith and, when Athelstan was crowned king, Northumbria became part of England. The Normans also made their presence felt, as they rebuilt many of the monasteries, founded abbeys and added castles (mainly defensive structures against the Scots) and it's these that make the county so interesting. When the countries united under James VI, many of the castles became less important and their decline was inevitable. It's these ruins that bring the countryside alive.

The county also played its part in the Industrial Revolution producing the coal that helped power the growth of the British Empire around the world.





ALNWICK

The centre of Northumberland under the Normans, Alnwick remains its beating heart. It's surrounded by picturesque countryside, is within easy reach of the coast and boasts many architectural delights. It was even voted the best place to live in the UK. Its attractive cobbled streets are lined with independent shops. Highlights include the dog-friendly Barter Books and its café.

www.visitalnwick.org.uk

WALK Dogs are prohibited from the castle and Hulne Park but can use the pastures

STAY Pegasus Cottage, West End, Craster, Alnwick NE66 3TS

www.gracedarlingholidays.com

EAT Blink Bonny, Christon Bank, Alnwick Northumberland NE66 3ES



ALNMOUTH

A charming village on the coast, Alnmouth was an important grain port until a hurricane altered the course of river in 1806 and stranded the harbour. Its gaily painted houses ensure it remains a popular destination and you'll find several dog-friendly pubs, cafés and restaurants particularly along Northumberland Street try The Schooner and The Sun Inn or, if you're a real foodie, Hooked – dogs are welcome in a separate dining area.

WALK Enjoy the golden sands of the beach.

STAY Waterside View Cottage, Nr Alnmouth Northumberland NE66 3QL
www.ownersdirect.co.uk

EAT The Village Tearooms, 58 Northumberland Street, Alnmouth NE66 2RS



AMBLE

Originally a small fishing port, Amble thrived during the 19th century when it shipped coal from its newly constructed harbour. Now it's more important as the southern gateway of the Northumberland Coast AONB. Launched this spring, Amble Harbour Village boasts a seafood centre and 15 retail pods. The coastline is rich in wildlife so you don't miss one of Dave Gray's dog-friendly Puffin Cruises. And don't leave without trying a Spurelli ice-cream.

WALK Head north along the river to Warkworth or south past the harbour until you reach Hauxley

STAY Walkmill Campsite, Guyzance NE65 9AJ

EAT The Wellwood Arms, High Street, Amble



CRASTER

The undoubted home of the kipper, Craster may lack amenities but the rugged coastline is popular with walkers. And, if you fancy tasting the local delicacy, you can purchase kippers from the smokehouse, L Robson & Sons. If you fancy a snack, The Pipers Pitch serves a kipper in a bun. The Mick Oxley Gallery is also worth a visit.

www.visitcraster.org.uk

WALK Although the most obvious destination is Dunstanburgh Castle, others include Cullernose Point via Howick and the secret cove of Rumbling Kern

STAY Artist's Cottage, Craster

www.crabtreeandcrabtree.com

EAT The Shoreline Café, 1 Church Street, Craster NE66 3TH

Why visit Northumberland



CORBRIDGE

Once the most northerly settlement in the Roman empire, Corbridge supplied Hadrian's Wall and boasts many architectural delights from that period, plus a Saxon church and a 17th-century bridge. Corbridge has been popular with shoppers since the 19th century and has an eclectic mix of independents, many dog-friendly – Activ Cycles (with a café), The Balman Gallery (Duck House Café), Craftworks, Re (homewares) and Retriques.

WALK images.visitnorthumberland.com/routes/Corbridge_and_Aydon_Castle.pdf

STAY The Hayes, Newcastle Rd, Corbridge NE45 5LP www.hayes-corbridge.co.uk

EAT Watling Coffee House, 11 Watling Street, Corbridge NE45 5AG



ROTHBURY

Often called the capital of Coquetdale, Rothbury is ideally placed if you're visiting Northumberland, because it's just 30 minutes from the coast, five minutes from the Simonside Hills and within easy reach of the National Park. It boasts a large number of boutiques, shops and galleries – several including Pots & Paws, Coquetdale Arts Centre and The Congregational Art Gallery & Café welcome dogs.

WALK This circular route takes in many of the local sights www.northofthetyne.co.uk/RothburyWalk.html

STAY Tomlinsons Café Bunkhouse, Bridge Street, Rothbury NE65 7SF

EAT The Railway Hotel, Bridge Street, Rothbury NE65 7SE



HEXHAM

Situated in the Tyne Valley, Hexham holds the title of England's favourite market town. Its winding streets boast many architectural delights including Hexham Abbey, the Old Gaol and the Moot Hall. You'll find market stalls in the Shambles and a full market every Tuesday and Saturday. There's a wide range of independent shops and several such as The Vintage Emporium, The Peter Flanagan Gallery, The Small World Café, The Garden Coffee House and Shire Gate Café are dog-friendly.

WALK Try the Tyne Green Trail at

www.visithexham.net/walks.htm

STAY Rosemary Cottage, Hexham NE46 3EL

EAT Holly Bush Inn, The Terrace, Hexham Northumberland NE48 1PW



BLANCHLAND

Set beside the river Derwent, Blanchland is considered one of the prettiest villages in the North Pennines AONB. It was bought by Nathaniel Lord Crewe in 1708 and, on his death, became part of a charitable trust. Most of the properties were built during the 18th century using stone from the abbey (set up by white-robed Canons of Premontre in the 1160s) and the whole area is now protected by a conservation order.

WALK There are numerous routes locally including several based on packhorse trails www.explorenorthpennines.org.uk/blanchland

STAY Lord Crewe Arms, The Square, Blanchland, Consett DH8 9SP

www.lordcrewearmsblanchland.co.uk



SEAHOUSES

Seahouses may be one of Northumberland's most popular destinations, but it was quite insignificant until the harbour was created in 1889. It's now a lively resort, with a wide variety of shops, amusements and cafés. The Farne Islands, with their populations of seabirds, seals and whales, are a popular attraction – dogs are welcome on the boats operated by Golden Gate, Hanvey's and Billy Shiel's, but are prohibited from landing on any but Longstone Island

WALK Head south until you reach Beadnell Bay **STAY** Wyndgrove House, 156 Main Street, Seahouses NE68 7UA

www.wyndgrovehouse.co.uk

EAT Pinnacles, 17 Main Street, Seahouses NE68 7RE www.pinnaclesfishandchips.com



LOW NEWTON BY THE SEA

One of the most attractive villages on the Northumberland coast, Low Newton by the Sea boasts an open-ended square of cream-washed cottages, overlooking a picturesque sandy beach. At its heart is The Ship Inn which, with its microbrewery, has become a popular destination and is well worth a visit. There's only a small car park but many people use the lane

WALK The coastline between Low Newton and Craster is amazing and includes them inspiring ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle

STAY The Joiners Arms, High Newton-by-the-Sea NE66 3EA

www.joiners-arms.com

EAT The Ship Inn, Low Newton-by-the-Sea, NE66 3EL www.shipinnnewton.co.uk

Taking a hike!

Northumberland boasts some of the best walking country in England

Northumberland National Park covers a large swathe of the county and is one of England's least populated areas. It's popular with walkers who enjoy exploring Hadrian's Wall, the Cheviots and Kielder Water.

ALLEN BANKS

One of the largest areas of ancient woodland in the county, Allen Banks includes the 101-acre Stawardpeel Site of Special Scientific Interest and boasts miles of waymarked walks you can enjoy. There's a pay and display car park – free if you're a National Trust member. Allen Banks and Staward Gorge, Nr Ridley Hall, Bardon Mill, Hexham, Northumberland www.nationaltrust.org.uk

WALK You can download routes from the website above

STAY There are three National Trust properties nearby – Peel Bothy, Housesteads Farm and Springwell Cottage. www.nationaltrustholidays.co.uk

EAT The Garden Station Café or The Cartsbog Inn at Langley or Housesteads visitor centre

KIELDER WATER

Northern Europe's largest artificial lake, Kielder Water is surrounded by England's most extensive area of woodland. It's one of Northumberland's most popular attractions and boasts hundreds of miles of pathways.

www.visitkielder.com

WALK The Lakeside Way follows the shoreline – download a trails guide from the website

STAY There are camping and caravan sites in the park or you can stay in a luxury lodge

EAT There are cafés at Tower Knowe and Kielder Castle visitor centres and dogs are welcome in the bar at The Boat Inn, Leaplish Waterside Park

THE CHEVIOT HILLS

A picturesque range of hills, the Cheviots straddle the border.

You'll find downloadable walking routes at

www.cheviotwalks.org

If you fancy getting away from it, visit the College Valley Estate. It's privately owned and whilst walkers are welcome, car entry is strictly limited. Permits cost £10 from Smiths Gore in Wooler. www.college-valley.co.uk

WALK Check website above

STAY There are several holiday properties on the estate

EAT The Terrace Café, 18 Market Place, Wooler NE71 6LQ

SIMONSIDE

Studded with ancient burial grounds, Bronze Age cairns and an Iron Age settlement, the Simonside Hills are ideal walking country. Climb Simonside from the archaeological site at Lordenshaws any enjoy learning more about the past – there's a car park on the Hexham road.

LONG-DISTANCE PATHWAYS

HADRIAN'S WALL PATH

Running between Wallsend and Bowness-on-Solway, Hadrian's Wall Path is popular with walkers because, although it can be quite muddy, it isn't that strenuous and can be split into stages. However, there are grazing animals so a lead is essential. Stiles may also cause a problem. Although there's a bus service, it only operates between April and September. One of the most picturesque sections is between Housesteads and Gilsland – there are car parks at both but charges apply. Please read the Countryside Code at www.gov.uk www.visithadrianswall.co.uk www.nationaltrail.co.uk/hadrianswallpath

THE COAST PATH

The Northumberland Coast Path runs 65 miles through an AONB and has been divided into six manageable walks, all of which can be completed in a day. The route is clearly signposted and most of it is level with just the occasional incline. Circular coastal routes start at Alnmouth, Craster, Low Newton-by-the-Sea, Bamburgh and Holy Island. Interactive maps can be

downloaded from

www.yournorthumberland.co.uk or you can order a guide from www.northumberland.gov.uk

ST OSWALD'S WAY

St Oswald's Way links places associated with the 7th-century king after whom it was named. Starting at Lindisfarne, it heads along the coast via Bamburgh, Craster and Warkworth then bears west through Rothbury and finishes in Heavenfield, an overall distance of 97 miles. www.stoswaldsway.com

ST CUTHBERT'S WAY

Linking Melrose Abbey with Lindisfarne, St Cuthbert's Way runs 63 miles through the heart of Northumberland. The route is split into sections and that between Kirk Yetholm and Wooler is probably the best as it avoids the tidal causeway at Holy Island. www.stcuthbertsway.net

THE PENNINE WAY

Running along the backbone of England, The Pennine Way provides 268 miles of the finest walking including a section through the Northumberland National Park. www.pennineway.co.uk

Northern strongholds

Few places sum up the UK's turbulent past so evocatively



Northumberland has more castles than any other county in England – a magnificent legacy of its turbulent past. Although there are more than 70 sites, many have long since disappeared and many others are romantic ruins. A few are still in their prime, having been carefully maintained over the centuries, rebuilt after destruction or carefully renovated after years of decline.

Alnwick Castle is one of the UK's major attractions and its garden is well worth visiting, whether you're interested in plants, sculpture or architecture. Sadly, dogs aren't allowed anywhere on the estate. The best option, if you're tempted by its many attractions, is a dog-sitter and many people have spoken highly of Happy Hounds at Low Hocket Farm.

Chillingham Castle, also in Alnwick, is equally unwelcoming of dogs which is a great shame. It's still worth considering though, especially if you enjoy plain old English eccentricity. It's privately owned so unlike most stately homes in that the owner, Sir Humphrey Wakefield, has let the castle do the talking. And Chillingham's wild cattle, which are rarer than any panda, would scare off any walkers.



If you do fancy exploring a castle near Alnwick, then the ruins at Edlingham (above) are within easy reach of the village. It's a picturesque setting and the nearby church is also quite interesting. Unlike its neighbours, you can walk your dog through the grounds.



Why visit Northumberland



AYDON CASTLE

Almost completely intact, Aydon Castle is one of the finest examples of a 13th-century English manor house. Defensive structures were added when the Scots began pillaging south of the border and the property changed hands several times. Despite being an important stronghold, it has plenty of charm and one can easily imagine living there, making it a popular day out with families. It's surrounded by picturesque countryside just a mile from Corbridge. Alongside the remains of the house, gardens

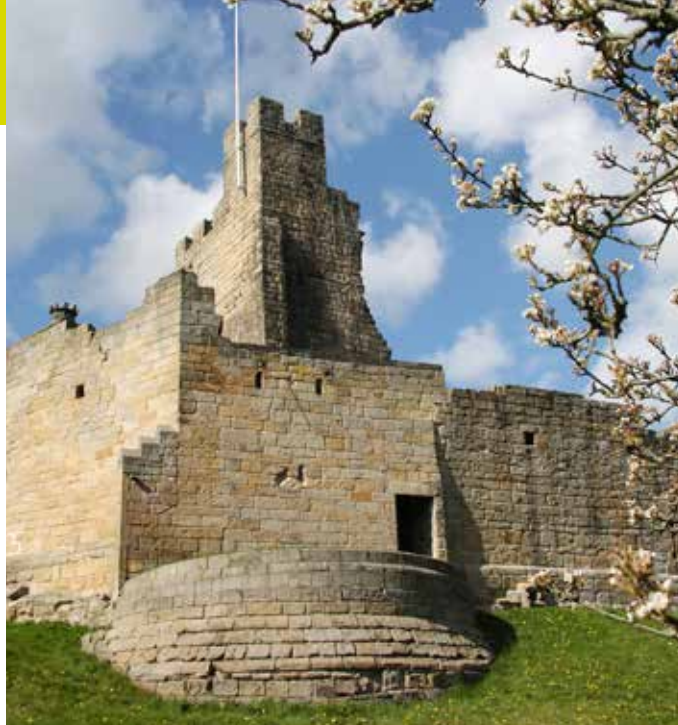
and courtyard, highlights include the Green Man Carving. The guides bring it alive. Aydon Castle, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5PJ www.english-heritage.org.uk
WALK Leave your car in Corbridge and head there across the fields images.visitnorthumberland.com/routes/Corbridge_and_Aydon_Castle.pdf
STAY The Golden Lion, Hill Street, Corbridge NE45 5AA www.goldenlion-corbridge.co.uk
EAT The old orchard makes a wonderful picnic area.



WARKWORTH CASTLE

Warkworth Castle was first recorded in a charter of 1157 when it was merely a timber structure. It was improved by Robert fitz Richard then strengthened by his descendant John de Clavering but its most famous owners were the Percy family who made the most serious changes in the 19th century. It was given to the Office of Works by the 9th Duke and is now managed by English Heritage. Also worth a visit is the Hermitage – head along the river, a lovely walk, until you reach the crossing point and

ring the bell. A ferryman will drop you on the other side Warkworth Castle, Warkworth, Northumberland NE65 0UJ www.english-heritage.org.uk
WALK Enjoy the village between the castle at one end and the church of St Lawrence at the other, also the black bridge swimming f your dog enjoys the water
STAY Warkworth House, 16 Bridge Street, Warkworth Northumberland NE65 0XB www.warkworthhousehotel.co.uk
EAT The Masons Arms, 3 Dial Place, Warkworth NE65 0UR



PRUDHOE CASTLE

Standing on a ridge above River Tyne, Prudhoe Castle was the home of the Umfravilles until it was taken over by the Percy family. Many alterations were made but the main period of renovation was between 1808 and 1817 when the old dwellings were replaced by a Georgian mansion – this now contains the ticket office, a shop and exhibitions. Of particular interest are the barbican, the gatehouse and the remains of the original Great Hall, which was replaced in the 15th

century. The castle may be quite small in stature but the location is picturesque. It's also worth noting that it was the only Northumberland castle to resist the Scots.
Prudhoe Castle, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 6NA www.english-heritage.org.uk
WALK Head through Tyne Riverside Park until you reach Wylam Railway Bridge
STAY The Black Horse, Red Row, Beamish, Co. Durham DH9 0RW www.blackhorsebeamish.co.uk
EAT The Boathouse, Station Rd, Wylam NE41 8HR



DUNSTANBURGH CASTLE

Standing on a remote headland, Dunstanburgh Castle is a magnificent site. It was built by the Earl of Lancaster 800 years ago and was one of the grandest in northern England. Dunstanburgh Castle, Craster Northumberland NE66 3TT www.english-heritage.org.uk
WALK The most enjoyable route

is from Craster where you'll find a reasonably sized council car park – dogs must be kept on a lead as animals graze on the National Trust land.
STAY Harbour House, Craster www.coastalretreats.co.uk
EAT The Jolly Fisherman, Haven Hill, Craster NE66 3TR www.thejollyfishermancraster.co.uk

LANGLEY CASTLE

Originally built by Sir Thomas de Lucy in 1350, Langley Castle retains much of its architectural integrity despite changing hands many times over the centuries and becoming a luxury hotel. Langley Castle, Hexham Northumberland

www.langleycastle.com

WALK You can download several walking routes at **www.langleycastle.com/walks.html**

STAY Dogs are welcome in Castle View, a converted property in the grounds

EAT Dogs aren't allowed in



the main building but you can enjoy afternoon tea in the garden if you're passing and guests of the hotel can leave well-behaved dogs in their room whilst they eat.



MORPETH CASTLE

Once the capital of Northumberland, Morpeth has had a castle since the 11th century. This Norman structure was destroyed by King John but another castle was built around 1350. Little, apart from the much-altered gatehouse now remains. Although the castle was important during the 16th century when it welcomed Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII and the widowed Queen of Scotland,

it declined rapidly and, after changing hands several times, was eventually renovated by The Landmark Trust and rented out as a holiday property. Morpeth Castle, Morpeth, Northumberland

www.landmarktrust.org.uk

WALK Head east along the River Wansbeck until you reach the charming village of Bothal

STAY The castle sleeps seven people and also welcomes dogs

EAT The Tap & Spile, Manchester Street, Morpeth NE61 1BH



BELSAY HALL, CASTLE & GARDENS

One of the best days out in Northumberland, Belsay Hall boasts a tempting range of attractions – a grand castle, a Jacobean mansion and 30 acres of landscaped grounds.

The hall at its heart is an architectural masterpiece and was inspired by the temples of ancient Greece. Explore the Pillar Hall and you can't help but admire its stark beauty, which is enhanced by its complete lack of contents. You can walk your dog around the estate and there are plenty of woodland paths you can enjoy but the highlight is probably The Quarry

Garden, a fantasy of ravines pinnacles and unusual plants. Belsay Hall, Castle & Gardens, Morpeth, Northumberland NE20 0DX

www.english-heritage.org.uk

WALK Explore the woodland paths around the lake

STAY Meldon Park, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3SW

www.meldonpark.co.uk

EAT Although there's a tea room, dogs are prohibited from the main building – however, you can use picnic benches in the grounds. Alternatively, there are seats outside The Blacksmiths Coffee Shop in Belsay and the café at Bolam Lake Country Park.

BAMBURGH CASTLE

It's a shame that Bamburgh Castle doesn't welcome dogs because it's one of Northumberland's most evocative sights. Few places sum up the awesome magnificence of this ancient kingdom so effectively. Luckily, there's a pathway, with interpretation boards, around the base so everyone can learn more about its past. You'll find thousands of artefacts inside while those who are less interested can enjoy the beach, which is popular with dog-walkers. Also worth a visit are The Grace Darling Museum and the church where she was

buried – St Aiden's.

Bamburgh Castle, Bamburgh NE69 7DF

www.bamburghcastle.com

WALK Cross the cricket green then head north along the beach until you reach Stag Rock - return via the sand dunes and The Wynding.

Alternatively, walk north along The Wynding then take the bridleway to Budle Bay. Walk south and Seahouses is three miles along the coast

STAY Glebe House, Radcliffe Rd, Bamburgh NE69 7AE

www.bamburghglebe.co.uk

EAT The Victoria Hotel, Front Street, Bamburgh NE67 7BP

www.victoriahotel.net



Why visit Northumberland



LINDISFARNE CASTLE

The Holy Island of Lindisfarne is one of Northumberland's most popular attractions. Records document its habitation since the 6th century when it was an important centre of Celtic Christianity – Saint Aiden came from Iona and founded a monastery in 635AD. A castle was added in 15 but renovated by Arts & Crafts architect Edward Lutyens on behalf of a prominent Edwardian bachelor. There are sheep grazing on the island so you must keep your dog on a lead. Other highlights include a Gertrude Jekyll-

designed garden, the lime kilns at Castle Point and the ruins of the monastery. The island is tidal so the opening times vary – you can walk, drive or catch a bus and there's a car park on the island.

Lindisfarne Castle, Holy Island
Northumberland TD15 2SH
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

WALK Most people with dogs walk across the causeway then explore the beach

STAY Britannia House, Holy Island TD15 2RX

EAT The Crown, Market Place, Holy Island TD15 2RU

www.holyislandcrown.co.uk



ETAL CASTLE

The charming villages of Ford and Etal lie within one of Northumberland's most prestigious estates, the home of the Joicey family since 1908. The estate has an interesting past and boasts many attractions including its castle. It's quite small so only worth visiting if you're investigating the other highlights –

*Flodden Battlefield interpretation boards explain the events of 1513, the last time a British monarch fell in war.

*The Heatherslaw Light Railway Running between Heatherslaw

Station and Etal Castle, it's a picturesque route that takes 50 – dogs travel free.

*Heatherslaw Corn Mill
Etal Castle, Cornhill on Tweed
Northumberland TD12 4TN

www.english-heritage.org.uk
WALK There are many pathways around the estate including the Flodden Battlefield Trail – leaflets detailing the routes are available from the mill shop

STAY Fenton Hill Farm, Wooler, Northumberland NE71 1JJ
www.fentonhillfarm.co.uk

EAT There's a choice of cafe's including The Lavender Tearooms at Etal Post Office.



NORHAM CASTLE

Standing high above the Tweed, Norham Castle enjoys a commanding position and was one of the border's strongest strongholds. It was built on the orders of Ranulf Flambard, the Bishop of Durham and, although attacked repeatedly, wasn't captured until 1136 when David I of Scotland invaded. Over the centuries it entertained King John, William the Lion and Edward I. Robert the Bruce also spent nearly a year laying siege. It came under attack during the Wars of the Roses and was also battered by the artillery of James VI. The castle surrendered

but was regained by the English when he was killed at Flodden. Norham Castle, Norham
Northumberland TD15 2JY
www.english-heritage.org.uk

WALK Visit the church then head east along the river to Horncliffe and, a mile beyond, the Union Suspension Bridge or, westerly until you reach the River Till.

STAY The Masons Arms, 16 West Street, Norham TD15 2LB

www.themasonsarmsnorham.co.uk

EAT The Victoria Hotel, 3 Castle Street, Norham, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 2LQ
www.victoriahotelnorham.co.uk



BERWICK-UPON-TWEED CASTLE & RAMPARTS

Lying within vigorously disputed border country, Berwick Castle was once one of the most important strongholds in the British Isles and changed hands several times. It sustained substantial damage but was rendered almost obsolete when ramparts were built during the 16th century. The castle declined and large parts of the structure were used as a quarry. Now very little remains bar the White Wall and the Breakneck Stair. The Lowry Trail shows many of the sites he painted when visiting the region.

Berwick-upon-Tweed Castle & Ramparts, Northumberland
TD15 1DF

www.english-heritage.org.uk

WALK You can walk around Berwick in one hour – it's well-signed with boards explaining the history of The Elizabethan Walls – the views of the river Tweed, the coast and Berwick are spectacular. You can also explore the barracks, quay and lighthouse.

STAY Tweed Cottage, Berwick, Northumberland TD15 1TE

www.borderholidayhomes.co.uk

EAT The Albion Inn, Main Street, Spittal, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1QY

Doggy days out

Northumberland has a rich heritage you can enjoy with your dog

PAXTON HOUSE

A stylish Palladian house with original interiors and Chippendale furniture, it has 80 acres of landscaped grounds, picturesque river walks and a tearoom. Adult, £5.

Paxton House, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1SZ

www.paxtonhouse.co.uk



NORTHUMBERLANDIA

A unique piece of art, Northumberlandia, was created using 1.5 million tonnes of spoil from the coal mine. She reclines gracefully with peaks in the most obvious places. The sweeping pathways draw you around revealing panoramic views. Entry is free.

Northumberlandia, Fisher Lane, Cramlington NE23 8AU

www.northumberlandia.com



WALLINGTON

Sir Charles Philips Trevelyan was a man of contradictions – an aristocrat who served in a Labour government. Wallington has a wide variety of antiques, treasures and pre-Raphaelite paintings. Dogs are welcome in the grounds – use leads around animals. Walking routes available. Adult, £12.60.

Wallington, Nr Cambo, Morpeth NE61 4AR

www.nationaltrust.org.uk



CRAGSIDE

The inspirational home of Lord Armstrong, Cragside, was the first property to be lit by hydroelectricity and contains an eclectic mix of artefacts. The house is surrounded by 1,000 acres of grounds that boast an amazing plant collection and 30 miles of pathways, plus a café. Entry prices vary.

Cragside, Rothbury NE56 7PX

www.nationaltrust.org.uk



SEATON DELAVAL

One of the architect Sir John Vanbrugh's smallest country houses, Seaton Delaval is the best surviving example of English Baroque architecture. The Central Hall's emptiness merely emphasises its grandeur. Dogs on leads – you can download routes from the website. Adult, £6.

Seaton Delaval, The Avenue, Seaton Sluice NE26 4QR www.nationaltrust.org.uk



PRESTON TOWER

An architectural gem, Preston Tower's guard room, prison and living areas show what life might have been like in the 1390s. The views from the tower are wonderful so it's worth the climb. You can walk your dog in the grounds. Adult, £2 – payment via an honesty box.

Preston Tower, Chathill NE67 5DH

www.prestontower.co.uk



BRINKBURN PRIORY

After years of neglect, Brinkburn Priory was renovated sensitively in the 1800s and stands as one of the finest examples of early Gothic architecture in Northumberland. Parts of the monastic buildings were incorporated into the 16th-century manor house. Adult, £3.90.

Brinkburn Priory, Longframlington NE65 8AR

www.english-heritage.org.uk



Nature's best therapy

Walking beside the sea stirs our deepest emotions and can prove invaluable in helping us cope with life's many problems

The Northumberland coast is magnificent, its wide sandy beaches backed by dunes and punctuated by dramatic rocky headlands that boast some of our country's most spectacular castles. Nothing lifts the spirits as effectively as a stroll along the coast – there's something calming about how the waves crash, ceaselessly, at your feet. And, with most of Northumberland's beaches welcoming dogs all year round, it's the cheapest therapy available and one you can try with man's best friend. Search online and you'll find conflicting advice about which beaches impose

seasonal restrictions (May-September) but the most authoritative is from those who run the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The AONB covers the 39 miles of coastline between Berwick and the Coquet estuary and there are only restrictions at Beadnell, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Blyth but these are clearly signed. It's really important that dog-owners treat the coast with respect as large areas have been designated wildlife reserves, so please download the guide below – www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=6905

ENJOY ROCK POOLS?

Boulmer Haven's a really interesting stretch of coastline, as it's bordered by a rocky reef that, when exposed at low tide, has deep gullies are rich in wildlife





BLYTH SOUTH BEACH

An ancient settlement, Blyth grew rapidly as a port in the 18th century when it reaped the rewards of the coal, fishing and shipbuilding industries. It may not be an obvious destination, unless you're a fan of wind turbines because these dominate the harbour but it has an extensive beach and dogs are welcome on all but a short section in front of the promenade. It's also the only beach in the whole of Northumberland with huts you can hire.

WALK Explore Plessey Woods Country Park and wander along the River Blyth

STAY Seddons Caravan Park, Widdrington Moor, Morpeth NE61 5DR

www.seddons.net

EAT Master Ridley's Ice & Coffee Parlour, Ridley Park, Blyth, Northumberland



CAMBOIS BEACH

Cambois, a village just south of the Wansbeck estuary, may be quite plain but it has an extensive beach. And the views, now that Blyth Power Station has been demolished, are much improved. There's a choice of car parks and there aren't any restrictions on the beach so dogs can run free. It isn't the most picturesque setting but the contrast between the beauty of the countryside and the remains of heavy industry make it quite interesting.

WALK There's a pathway along the dunes above the beach

STAY The Northumberland Arms, The Peth, Morpeth NE65 9EE

www.northumberlandarms-felton.co.uk

EAT Charlton's Bar, Cambois NE24 1SF

www.charltonsbarcambois.co.uk

DRURIDGE BAY

Stretching seven miles between Cresswell and Amble, Druridge Bay is one of the most spectacular sections of the Northumbrian Coast. The best parking is at Druridge Bay Country Park which is clearly signed just a mile out of Amble. Visit when the tide's out so you can experience how extensive it is. There are several nature reserves nearby – Druridge Pools, Cresswell and East Chevington but dogs should be on leads.

At the northern end of the bay, Amble Links is one of the cleanest beaches in the county. A gently sloping mixture of sand, shingle and rocks, it's nearly a mile in length. If you're shy, avoid the section around Chibburn because it's popular with nudists.

At the southern end of the bay, Cresswell may be light on amenities but it's picturesque and has an enormous beach. Cresswell Ices is open during the summer.

WALK It's wonderful walking country so you'll find a wide choice of routes –

- The Northumberland Coastal Path runs between Cresswell and Berwick-upon-Tweed.

- Druridge Bay Country Park makes a pleasant change from the beach – its freshwater lake is surrounded by woods and meadows.

- Catch a bus and you can walk the whole way along Druridge Bay and return by public transport – **www.arrivabus.co.uk**

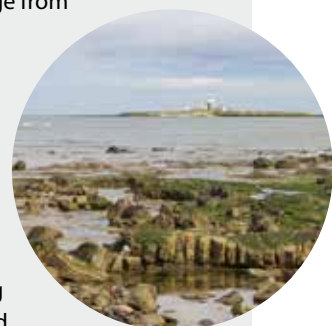
STAY Golden Sands Holiday Park, Beach Rd, Cresswell NE61 5LF

www.northumbrianleisure.co.uk

EAT There are seats outside the café at Druridge Bay Country Park visitor centre, you could eat a picnic on the beach or try The Drift Café at Cresswell – there's only limited parking nearby. **www.northumberland.gov.uk**



VITONORTHUMBERLAND.COM



LINDISFARNE

When visiting Lindisfarne, most people drive straight across the causeway and explore the castle but completely ignore the island's sandy coastline. A real shame because there are three wonderful beaches on the north coast. Remember the island is tidal!

- The Links is the most westerly of the beaches and also the most extensive, reaching Goswick Sands on the mainland when the tide's out. It's also the most exposed although the dunes provide some shelter. The views on a clear day are amazing.

- Coves Haven is backed by sand dunes and overlooked by cliffs at one end. Rock

pools are exposed at low tide.

- Keel Head Beach is more popular with walkers but feels just as isolated.

There's also a small beach near the harbour - it isn't quite as pretty but, being on the south side of the island, is the most accessible

WALK Lindisfarne is a national nature reserve so dogs must be under control at all times – use a lead if you have any concerns about disturbing the wildlife.

STAY The Lindisfarne Inn, Beal Northumberland TD15 2DP

www.lindisfarneinn.co.uk

EAT Pilgrims, Marygate, Holy Island Northumberland TD15 2SJ

www.pilgrimscoffee.com



EMBLETON SANDS

Owned by the National Trust, Embleton Bay is one of Northumberland's most spectacular beaches – wide and sandy with picturesque views of Dunstanburgh Castle.

WALK After you've had a run on the beach, head around the castle then along the coast until you reach the village of Craster

STAY Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel, Embleton, Alnwick N66 3UN

www.dunstanburghcastlehotel.co.uk

EAT Grey's Inn, Stanley Terrace, Embleton N66 3UY



SEAHOUSES NORTH

Although the harbour is Seahouses' main attraction, its beaches are also worth a visit. Seahouses North Beach is a lovely, with miles of golden sand you can enjoy, and welcomes dogs all year round. South of Seahouses, Annstead Beach is just as picturesque and is backed by dunes that are managed by Northumberland Wildlife Trust as one of its many nature reserves.

WALK There's a choice of pathways around the 105-acre reserve but dogs should be on leads.

STAY Bamburgh Castle Inn, Seahouses, Northumberland NE68 7SQ

www.bamburghcastleinn.co.uk

EAT Olde Ship Inn, Seahouses NE68 7RD

www.seahouses.co.uk



BOULMER

Although the beach at Boulmer is often covered with seaweed and thereby thought less attractive than its neighbours along the coast, it feels much more authentic – you may even see fishing cobbles hauled up the shore. It's also a great deal quieter.

WALK There are several other beaches nearby (Longhoughton Steel, Howdiemont Sands and Sugar Sands), but these are covered at high tide – however, their seclusion means they're rarely crowded. You can only reach Sugar Sands by walking from Longhoughton past Low Stead Farm.

STAY Low Stead Farm and Holiday Cottages, Longhoughton, Alnwick NE66 3AL

www.lowsteads.co.uk

EAT It's quite isolated so pack a picnic.



SEATON SLUICE

Located midway between Whitley Bay and Blyth, the village of Seaton Sluice makes an interesting day out. Its natural harbour helped it prosper during the 18th century but there are few signs of its industrial past. The wide sandy beach is rarely crowded and there's plenty of parking. It's popular with dog walkers all year round.

WALK Head along the coast until you reach St Mary's lighthouse and enjoy the panoramic views

STAY Old Hartley Caravan Club Site, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear NE26 4RL

www.ukcampsite.co.uk

EAT The Beehive, Hartley Lane, Whitley Bay NE25 0SZ

www.beehiveearsdon.co.uk



BEADNELL

A few miles south of Seahouses, Beadnell's dune-backed beach remains one of the most popular in Northumberland, particularly with water sports enthusiasts of all kinds, including divers who enjoy investigating the shipwrecks around the Farne Islands. It also boasts the only west-facing harbour (and its three 18th-century limekilns) on the east coast.

WALK Continue along the coast until you reach Low Newton by the Sea, have a drink at The Ship Inn, then return the same way.

STAY Hilly Brow, 9 St Ebbas Way, Beadnell Northumberland NE67 5GH

www.beadnellholidayhomes.co.uk

EAT Sea Breeze Fish and Chips, Harbour Rd, Beadnell NE67 5AN



ALNMOUTH

One of the most picturesque expanses of coast in Northumberland, Alnmouth Beach should be one of your first holiday destinations. Visit when the tide's out and you'll find miles of golden sand just a short walk from the village.

WALK The Ferry Hut, where the man who carried people across the river once sheltered, is possibly the smallest museum in the country and makes an interesting diversion – entry is free

STAY Dunes Court, Harbour Rd, Beadnell, Northumberland NE67 5EE

www.gracedarlingholidays.com

EAT The Coach Inn, Lesbury, Alnwick Northumberland NE66 3PP

www.coachinnlesbury.co.uk



GREENSES HARBOUR

Nestling within a sheltered bay, Greenses Harbour was once a thriving fishing port. Sadly, the sea fishermen who worked there and lived in nearby Low Greens, have long gone but the beach is sandy and remains popular with those visiting Berwick.

There's another beach just north of the pier (worth walking along) – this enjoys panoramic views of the lighthouse, Lindisfarne and Bamburgh Castle.

WALK Join the Berwickshire Coastal Path and head north until you reach St Abbs.

STAY 1 Sallyport, Off Bridge Street, Berwick Northumberland TD15 1EZ

www.sallyport.co.uk

EAT The Barrels Alehouse, 59 Bridge Street, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1ES



SPITTAL

Popular with families, Spittal has been a holiday resort since the 18th century and boasts all the amenities you'd expect including a splash park. The Venetian Pavilion hints at happier times (it's now a tawdry amusement arcade) but, if you enjoy traditional seaside pursuits, it's worth a visit because the beach is wonderful, with acres of golden sand you can explore.

WALK Join the coastal path and head south until you reach Cocklawburn Beach – it's rocky but there's plenty of sand at low tide

STAY Caroline House, 110 Main Street, Spittal TD15 1RD

www.carolinehouse.net

EAT Cafe Crema, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 BN

BAMBURGH

Although it's the castle that dominates, Bamburgh also boasts a picturesque village and one of the most spectacular stretches of coastline in the country. The golden sands are backed by dunes and there are rock pools at the northern end. There's limited parking at the castle and on Links Road but it gets busy in summer so your best bet may be using The Wynding instead.

WALK Explore Bamburgh itself – it has resisted any commercialisation and is rich in architectural heritage

STAY Glebe House, Radcliffe Rd, Bamburgh NE69 7AE

www.bamburghglebe.co.uk

EAT Create a picnic using local produce from The Pantry

www.thepantrybamburgh.co.uk



Why visit Northumberland



Alongside the beaches that appear in the guides, Northumberland has several others that remain relatively unknown.

- Hauxley Haven lies just south of Amble – you can park along Hauxley Lane or in Low Hauxley itself. A sandy beach, it's almost hidden behind dunes.
- Howick Beach is a wonderful mix of rocky inlets, sand and picturesque cliffs. It's small but few people know about its existence. It lies near Howick Hall, the home of the Earls Grey, who created a special blend of tea. Sadly, dogs aren't welcome on the estate. There's limited parking nearby. The Bathing House, which was used by the family when swimming, is now available as a holiday property and can be rented through www.northumbria-byways.com
- Ross Back Sands, a three-

mile stretch of golden sand, lies between Bamburgh and Holy Island. It's a mile from the nearest car park so remains quiet even in summer. However, there are restrictions at certain times of the year to protect ground-nesting birds.

● A spectacular stretch of sand, Warkworth Beach runs between Birling Carrs and the breakwater at Amble. Although it's quite a walk from the village, it's quieter than its neighbours with very few holiday-makers knowing it exists. It's best at low tide when it becomes a vast expanse of golden sand, with panoramic views of the sea.

● Cheswick Sands is one of the largest beaches in Northumberland and many think it the loveliest – part of a national nature reserve, there are acres of golden sand and hardly any people.



The Bathing House

Remember wildlife

Northumberland coast's beaches, dunes and cliffs attract significant bird populations and these are safeguarded within protected areas – National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

It's important that you're aware of these areas and of any special measures in place – that way you can enjoy the Northumberland Coast with your dog without harming the wildlife. NNRs have strict byelaws whilst SSSIs and SPAs protect nationally and internationally important numbers of breeding, overwintering and passage birds throughout the year.

During the summer, the Northumberland coast is busy with ground-nesting birds particularly little terns (the second rarest breeding seabird in the UK), which regularly nest at the National Trust's Long Nanny Tern Colony (between Beadnell and High Newton) and on Natural England's Lindisfarne NNR (Berwick - Budle Bay). Dogs are permitted at both reserves, but must be kept under control either on the lead or at heel.



Signage provides additional details about any restrictions to these areas between April and August so that breeding birds and their nests remain undisturbed.

These areas may be marked by fencing and or ropes and should be avoided. You can request a Shorebird Leaflet online or by contacting the reserves you plan on visiting at www.lindisfarnennr.blogspot.co.uk and www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

- Keep dogs under control on a lead or at heel
- Avoid fenced or roped off exclusion zones
- Check the signs and adhere to any measures in place
- Birds nest above the tide line so avoid sensitive areas by walking on wet sand
- Please take your litter away.

