

Heugh Battery and Hartlepool's Headland

This leaflet takes you on a short walk around a fascinating corner of Hartlepool. There have been gun-based defences here from the late 16th century through to the Second World War. The area was subjected to attack by German battlecruisers in the First World War and the walk visits some of the sites that suffered damage as a result. A highlight of the walk is the Heugh Battery Museum, which has limited opening times. Check ahead of your visit: www.heughbattery.com or tel: 01429 270 746

A 'Defended Land' Walk 2 miles/4km

P Heugh Battery car park. NZ531 338
Heugh Battery Museum, Moor Terrace, Headland, Hartlepool TS24 0PS.

Bus Service 7 operates between the Hartlepool Interchange and Headland town square.
www.connectteesvalley.com/bustimetables.asp

Rail Hartlepool is connected by rail with services from Newcastle, Sunderland and Middlesbrough.

Directions

- 1 From the car park walk straight ahead, passing the lighthouse on your left. Bear right to cut through the park (Redheugh Gardens). Exit the park on the seaward side (South Crescent).
- 2 Continue along the seafront. After about 200 metres keep left and walk down ramp to the promenade and keep on to the pier, another 300 metres further on. Walk along the pier to the lighthouse and back.
- 3 Back at the promenade climb the steps (or nearby ramp) next to the old ammunition store up to the road (Croft Terrace) and turn left.
- 4 Just after the park over the road turn right to walk along Sandwell Chare. Cross High Street and then across the town square to the grand building opposite (Borough Hall). Turn right and follow the road uphill for about 50 metres then turn right again, along path in front of St Hilda's Church.
- 5 At the road (Church Walk) turn left. At the junction turn left again. At the staggered crossroads continue straight ahead to walk along Friar Street which becomes Moor Parade with an open area (Town Moor) on your right.
- 6 At the end of the Town Moor take path on right and then right again to follow the edge of the Moor towards the beacon. Just after the beacon take the ramp down to the promenade and follow this back round the front of the Heugh Battery to the start.

The 'A Defended Land' project is part of the Heritage Lottery funded Limestone Landscapes Partnership. The purpose of the project is to conserve and interpret the history of the north-east's coastal defences. From Roman forts to defences against marauding pirates in the early modern period, there is a long history of coastal defence in the north-east. But the bulk of information left to us comes from the perceived threat of invasion by France in the latter half of the 19th century and the very real threat of German invasion during the two World Wars in the 20th century. This leaflet accompanies one of four walks along the coastline that explore the remains of defensive features from this period and the stories surrounding them.

- 1 Marsden to Trow Point
- 2 Roker cliffs and pier
- 3 Seaham
- 4 Hartlepool



This project has been coordinated by Groundwork NE & Cumbria. www.groundwork.org.uk/northeast
Look for us on Facebook and Twitter!

For more about the Limestone Landscapes project go to www.limestonelandscapes.info



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Hartlepool Headland

A 2-mile stroll around the seafront and headland and a chance to visit the fascinating Heugh Battery Museum



Cover photo ©M Byron



Making a positive difference to the unique environment of the Magnesian Limestone area

a **Heugh Battery** can be visited at the start or end of the walk as suits. The battery dates from the 1850s as Britain developed its coastal defences in readiness for a feared French attack. This was the only location in the country where our land forces engaged with the enemy during World War I. On 16th December 1914 the German navy launched an attack on Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby. Though the town's Heugh Battery returned fire the bombardment resulted in extensive damage and severe loss of life.

b Today little remains of **Lighthouse Battery**. It was built at the same time as Heugh Battery and at times was the more significant installation of the two. In 1892 the Lighthouse was upgraded with a 6 inch 'disappearing gun' (see the 'Marsden to Trow Point' leaflet) while the Heugh Battery was left empty. It played a particularly important role during the 1914 attack, with one shot temporarily disabling a German cruiser, almost forcing her to run aground. Just before World War II the Lighthouse gun was removed to replace one at the Heugh. In 1942 Lighthouse Battery was equipped with anti-aircraft guns along with the



Heugh and Fairy Cove Batteries. The gun on the site today is a cannon taken during the Crimea war and gifted to Hartlepool shortly after.

The first shells of the **1914 bombardment** fell in this area. A house at the end of Bath Terrace and the end houses of Moor Terrace were the first to be hit and were completely destroyed.



Policeman standing outside 4 Moor Terrace, one of the many houses damaged on the street. One of the inhabitants was killed in this instance.

c In **Redheugh Gardens** there are two memorials to those who died in the two World Wars. The column in the centre of the park is the memorial to 'Triumphant Youth', unveiled on 17th December 1921 by the Earl of Durham.

On the inside of the perimeter wall are five stone memorial plaques. The first four are in memory of those who died in World War I and the bombardment of the town. These were unveiled at the same time as the column. The fifth plaque was added after World War II.

During the 1914 bombardment the row of houses behind the gardens (Cliff Terrace) was hit. The end house (no. 19) was completely destroyed, killing two sisters who lived there and two doors down another lady died.

d In 1915 new defences were added to the existing Heugh, Lighthouse and Fairy Cove Batteries. The **Examination Battery**, consisting of one 4.7 inch gun, was established on the Old Pier. Examination batteries were built to support boats of the Royal Naval Examination Service as they inspected all ships entering the harbour.

The battery was removed in 1928, but re-armed in 1940 with two 12 pounder guns for defence against fast motor torpedo boats. Although there is little to see today the ammunition store building still stands by the steps that lead down to the promenade.

An information panel on Croft Terrace tells you about the 19th century defences against a Napoleonic invasion.



Old ammunition store for the Examination Battery

e The grand building ahead of you as you cross the town square is the **Borough Hall**, which was opened in 1866. It was the first building to get electricity in the Headland area of Hartlepool. To the right of the Borough Hall is **St Hilda's Church**, a prominent feature of the headland since the late 12th century. St Hilda herself lived in the 7th century and was an important figure in the conversion of England to Christianity.



Image courtesy of Joe Foster of Heugh Battery Museum

f Another building to suffer damage in the 1914 bombardment was the **Baptist Chapel** on the corner of Church St. One shell went straight through the wall (right). The modern Baptist Church you see today stands in its place.

g A major aim of the 1914 bombardment was to take out the batteries and enable raiders to attack the towns relatively unchallenged. Along with Moor Terrace, **Victoria Place** found itself in the line of fire. All the houses on Victoria Place were inflicted with blast and shell damage, with numbers 5 and 11 totally destroyed, creating a hole in the row. See if you can see signs of patching up work on these houses.

h In both World Wars the Town Moor and nearby housing were taken over to house, feed and train new gunners. Training facilities including trenches and pillboxes were built on the Moor.

i Guns have been sited at Fairy Cove since around 1740. Fairy Cove Battery was constructed along with Heugh and Lighthouse Batteries as part of the defences against a French invasion which never materialised. There were serious erosion problems with the cliffs crumbling away and the guns were removed in 1867. The 4.5 inch naval gun was put in place in 2006 to mark the site by Heugh Battery Trust and Hartlepool Town Council.

Near here, on Baltic Street, was a barracks that opened in 1861 and was in use until the end of the First World War.

j During World War II a 'Z' battery mobile rocket launcher stood near where the beacon is today. This formed part of anti-aircraft defences along with similar guns at Heugh and the Lighthouse. These 6 inch Mk 24 high angle guns had a range of around 14 miles and the use of radar gave greater accuracy. Multiple rockets fired simultaneously, exploding at the required altitude with something like a massive shot gun effect. These guns were never fired in anger and were soon mothballed, with men transferred to new units in the run up to D-Day.

Home Guard soldiers load a 'Z' battery mobile rocket launcher on Merseyside in July 1942

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k On the ramp back to the car park is a plaque recording where the first shell struck during the 1914 bombardment. This resulted in the first military casualty on these shores, the start of what would prove to be a terrible conflict with devastating loss of life.