



# DISCOVER THE UK'S UNESCO INDUSTRIAL TRAIL



# WHAT IS INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE?

From iconic bridges and post-industrial landscapes to vibrant cities of film, literature and learning - the UK's Industrial UNESCO sites are destinations of world-class cultural heritage, telling the fascinating stories of the UK's socio-economic growth through history.

**WORLD HERITAGE SITES** World Heritage is the designation for places that are of 'Outstanding Universal Value' and have been inscribed onto UNESCO's World Heritage List to be protected for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. The cultural or natural significance of these Sites is so exceptional that it transcends national boundaries and is of common importance for global humanity.

There are over 1200 World Heritage Sites in 168 countries worldwide and these include a wide variety of very significant historic features and monuments of all ages, exceptional landscapes and townscapes, and valuable ecosystems and natural phenomena. In many cases the Sites form part of living, working places, where the balance of conservation and every day activities and land uses, is the key to their future protection and sustainability.

**CREATIVE CITIES** UNESCO Creative Cities work towards the mission of placing creativity and cultural industries at the core of their urban development to make their cities safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable.

The UNESCO Creative Cities in the UK have placed imagination and creative talent at the heart of their strategy for local economic and social development. Each city

is accredited in one of eight creative fields: Crafts & Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, Music, or Architecture.

**LEARNING CITIES** UNESCO defines a learning city as a place that effectively mobilises its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning opportunities throughout the lives of their residents.

The Cities of Lifelong Learning in the UK form part of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities which comprises more than 350 cities in over 75 countries. Every city in the Network is united in its determination to promote lifelong learning and, through it, sustainable development in their cities.

**GLOBAL GEOPARKS** UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development.

All of the UK's Geoparks have internationally significant geology, but what makes them special is that they are community-led partnerships that promote an appreciation of natural and cultural heritage while supporting the area's sustainable economic development, primarily through geological and eco-tourism.

**Industrial Heritage Designations are special places for all to visit, explore and enjoy.**

# TOP TIPS FOR EXPLORING THE TRAIL BY RAIL & OTHER PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In the UK, transport is the largest emitting sector of greenhouse gases at around 27% of domestic emissions. However, rail accounts for 1% of domestic transport.

Using rail travel rather than the car can make a big environmental impact.

- ◆ **Do your research & plan!**
- ◆ Some designations are in the centre of cities, others in rural areas. The designation may be within walking distance of a railway station, or you may need to use the local bus.
- ◆ Opening hours may vary in winter or term time.
- ◆ There is a range of types of ticket for rail travel, but you can often get a bargain by buying an advance purchase ticket.

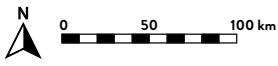
Railcard holders [railcard.co.uk](http://railcard.co.uk) can add a Plus Bus ticket [plusbus.info](http://plusbus.info).

- ◆ Rail tickets should be purchased before boarding a train, either paper or on your mobile device.
- ◆ Stay safe! Make sure you know which platform your train leaves from, stay alert to announcements...and no shortcuts across the tracks!

We hope you will explore the Industrial Trail sustainably by using rail and public transport.



BRADFORD CITY OF FILM, West Yorkshire (picture shows Saltaire World Heritage Site)



# UNESCO UK INDUSTRIAL TRAIL BY RAIL

## KEY TO SITE TYPE

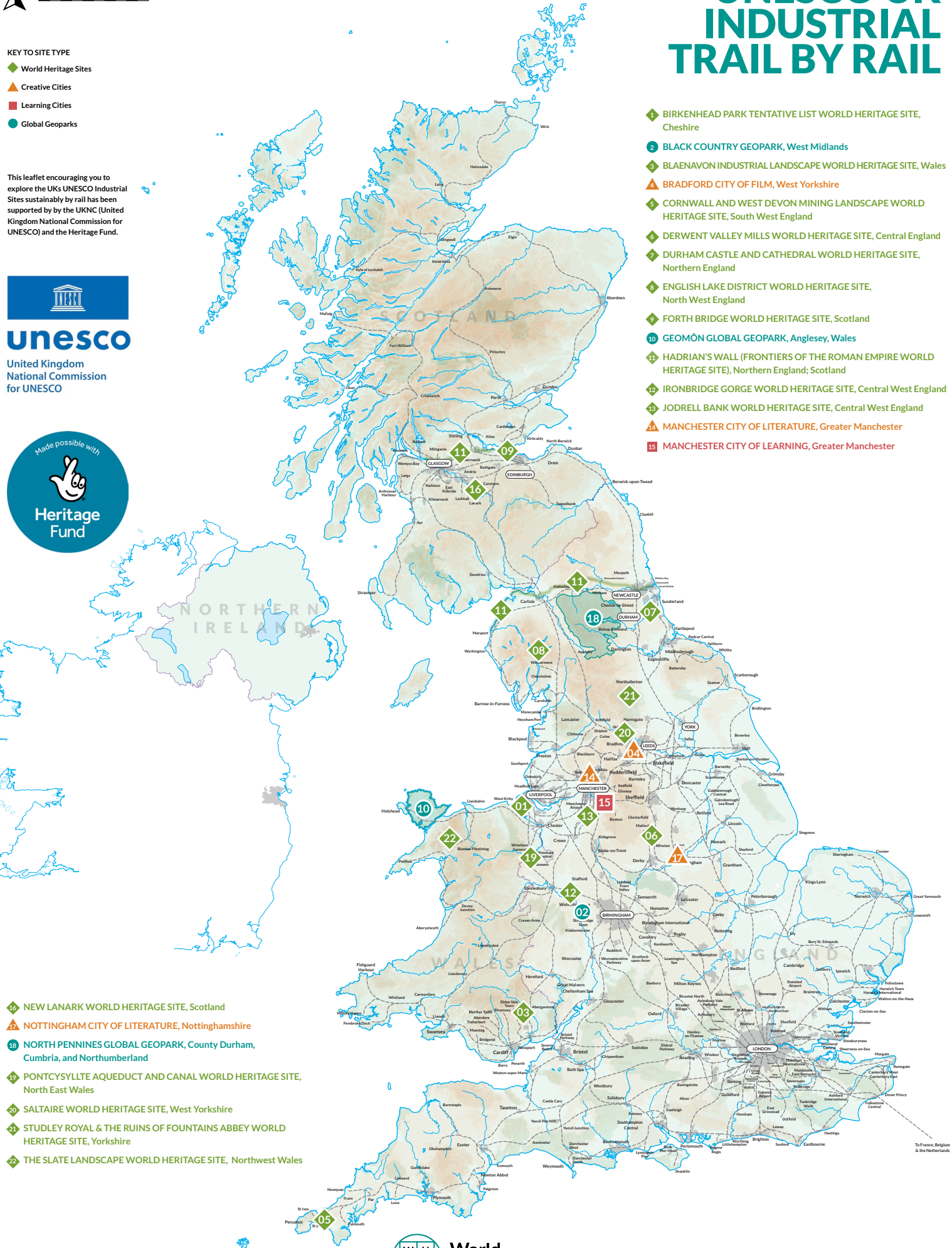
- ◆ World Heritage Sites
- ▲ Creative Cities
- Learning Cities
- Global Geoparks

This leaflet encouraging you to explore the UK's UNESCO Industrial Sites sustainably by rail has been supported by the UKNC (United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO) and the Heritage Fund.



## unesco

United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO



- ◆ **1** **BIRKENHEAD PARK TENTATIVE LIST WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Cheshire
- **2** **BLACK COUNTRY GEOPARK**, West Midlands
- ◆ **3** **BLAENAVON INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Wales
- ▲ **4** **BRADFORD CITY OF FILM**, West Yorkshire
- ◆ **5** **CORNWALL AND WEST DEVON MINING LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, South West England
- ◆ **6** **DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Central England
- ◆ **7** **DURHAM CASTLE AND CATHEDRAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Northern England
- ◆ **8** **ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, North West England
- ◆ **9** **FORTH BRIDGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Scotland
- **10** **GEOMON GLOBAL GEOPARK**, Anglesey, Wales
- ◆ **11** **HADRIAN'S WALL (FRONTIERS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE WORLD HERITAGE SITE)**, Northern England; Scotland
- ◆ **12** **IRONBRIDGE GORGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Central West England
- ◆ **13** **JODRELL BANK WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Central West England
- ▲ **14** **MANCHESTER CITY OF LITERATURE**, Greater Manchester
- **15** **MANCHESTER CITY OF LEARNING**, Greater Manchester

- ◆ **16** **NEW LANARK WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Scotland
- ▲ **17** **NOTTINGHAM CITY OF LITERATURE**, Nottinghamshire
- **18** **NORTH PENNINES GLOBAL GEOPARK**, County Durham, Cumbria, and Northumberland
- ◆ **19** **PONTCYSSLTTE AQUEDUCT AND CANAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, North East Wales
- ◆ **20** **SALTAIRE WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, West Yorkshire
- ◆ **21** **STUDLEY ROYAL & THE RUINS OF FOUNTAINS ABBEY WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Yorkshire
- ◆ **22** **THE SLATE LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE**, Northwest Wales



Data researched to June 2026.

# TRAVEL THE UNESCO UK INDUSTRIAL TRAIL

01.



## BIRKENHEAD PARK TENTATIVE LIST WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Cheshire

Opened in 1847, Birkenhead Park is a pioneer urban municipal park which offered a healthier, greener environment for people living in rapidly growing towns, regardless of social or economic background. Designed by Joseph Paxton, it brought the beauty of the English Landscape style into an accessible public space and is on the UK's Tentative List for UNESCO World Heritage status.

Nearest Station: **Birkenhead Park**

◆ [birkenhead-park.org.uk/](http://birkenhead-park.org.uk/)

02.



## BLACK COUNTRY GEOPARK, West Midlands

The Black Country is a UNESCO Global Geopark designated in 2020 in recognition of the international importance of this natural and related cultural heritage. Its story is told through a range of geo-sites and landscapes connecting the geology under your feet to today's biodiversity, unique arts and dialect springing from its industrial past, and protected industrial heritage.

Nearest Station: **Wolverhampton**

◆ [blackcountrygeopark.dudley.gov.uk/bcg/](http://blackcountrygeopark.dudley.gov.uk/bcg/)

03.



## BLAENAVON INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Wales

The area around Blaenavon is evidence of the pre-eminence of South Wales as the world's major producer of iron and coal in the 19th Century. It is a landscape shaped by human hand, dating from the early days of the Industrial Revolution - a significant stage in human evolution, when the iron and coal industries of South Wales were of global importance.

Nearest Station: **Abergavenny**

◆ [visitblaenavon.co.uk](http://visitblaenavon.co.uk)

04.



## BRADFORD CITY OF FILM, West Yorkshire

Bradford has a long history associated with film and filmmaking dating back to the birth of cinema and has long been acknowledged by the film industry as a film-friendly city. The Bradford District covers an area of approximately 141 square miles and is a mixture of urban and rural locations. These have been the backdrop for a wide array of film and television productions, showcasing the diverse landscapes and architecture of the area.

Nearest Station: **Bradford**

◆ [bradford-city-of-film.com/](http://bradford-city-of-film.com/)

05.



## CORNWALL & WEST DEVON MINING LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, South West England

UK's largest industrial WHS covers >20,000ha showing rapid growth of C18th & 19th copper & tin mining. Explore 10 Areas across one World Heritage Site - Eastern Gateway via train to Plymouth then bus to Tavistock Guildhall & Information Centre. Western Gateway via train to Penzance then bus to St Just, Tin Coast & Geevor Tin Mine. Other Areas are also accessible by public transport - check out Car Free Days for each Area at [www.cornishmining.org.uk/visit](http://www.cornishmining.org.uk/visit) to plan your journey.

Nearest Station: **Plymouth & Penzance**

◆ [cornishmining.org.uk](http://cornishmining.org.uk)

06.



## DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Central England

The 15 mile long valley follows the course of the River Derwent, and it contains intact remains of 18th and 19th Century cotton mills and associated historical industrial landscapes. The Derwent Valley Line takes passengers directly through the valley landscape from Matlock to Derby, with frequent stops at points of interest.

Nearest Stations: **Matlock, Derby, Belper & Cromford**

◆ [derwentvalleymills.org](http://derwentvalleymills.org)



### KEY TO SYMBOLS

- Additional Bus required/ available to access designation
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- Scenic Pedestrian Access
- Scenic Bicycle Access

### KEY TO SITE TYPE

- World Heritage Sites
- Creative Cities
- Learning Cities
- Global Geoparks

# TRAVEL THE UNESCO UK INDUSTRIAL TRAIL

**07.**  

**DURHAM CASTLE AND CATHEDRAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Northern England**

The Cathedral was built in the late 11th & early 12th Century to house the relics of St Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede. It is the largest and finest example of Norman architecture in England, whilst the adjacent Norman Castle was the residence of the Prince Bishop of Durham. The city is a 15-minute walk from the station, with frequent bus connections.

Nearest Station: **Durham**



◆ [bit.ly/durhamwhs](http://bit.ly/durhamwhs)

**08.**  

**ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT WORLD HERITAGE SITE, North West England**

The English Lake District World Heritage Site combines dramatic scenery with rich industrial heritage, including mining, quarrying, hill farming and historic transport routes that shaped the landscape of the area inspiring 18th Century Romantic writers and artists, most notably William Wordsworth. Accessible by train, local bus services and cycle routes, with train stations at **Ravenglass** and **Windermere**, and connections via West Coast Main Line stations at **Penrith** and **Oxenholme**.

◆ [lakesworldheritage.co.uk](http://lakesworldheritage.co.uk)



**09.**  

**FORTH BRIDGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Scotland**

Opened in 1890, the railway bridge crossing the Forth estuary had the world's longest spans of 521 metres. Still in use today it remains one of the greatest examples of cantilever trussed bridges. From Edinburgh Waverley either end of the bridge can be accessed by bike, train, or bus. The bridge itself is for rail traffic only.

Nearest Station: **North Queensferry Station/Dalmeny**

◆ [theforthbridges.org](http://theforthbridges.org)



**10.**  

**GEOMON GLOBAL GEOPARK, Anglesey, Wales**

Consisting of the Isle of Anglesey, a region of exceptional geological significance and geo-heritage with 1.8 billion years of Earth history, the oldest fossils in England and Wales, and more than 100 rock types from almost every Geological Period. The geodiversity provides a readily accessible commentary on climate and environmental change through geological time, and socio-economic developments that have defined the history of the island.

Nearest Station: **Mona Industrial Estate**

◆ [geomon.org.uk/](http://geomon.org.uk/)

**11.**  

**HADRIAN'S WALL (FRONTIERS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE WORLD HERITAGE SITE), Northern England; Scotland**



Hadrian's Wall (built c.AD122) is 118km long and stretches from East to West across Northern England. The Antonine Wall/earthworks (started in AD142) is 60km in length and stretches from Bo'ness to Old Kilpatrick. Both are accessible by foot and by bike.

Nearest Station to Hadrian's Wall: **Haltwhistle, Carlisle, Maryport & Newcastle stations**

Nearest Station to Antonine Wall: **Kilpatrick, Bearsden & Falkirk**

◆ [hadrianswallcountry.co.uk](http://hadrianswallcountry.co.uk)

◆ [antoninewall.org](http://antoninewall.org)

**12.**  





**IRONBRIDGE GORGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Central West England**

The Ironbridge Gorge is recognised as the cradle of the Industrial Revolution. The Gorge's unique landscape enabled Abraham Darby I's use of coke to smelt iron in 1709. This transformed mass production and accelerated industrial change, leading to the first cast-iron bridge in 1779; a symbol of engineering ambition and innovation.

Nearest Station: **Telford Station**

◆ [ironbridgegorgewhs.co.uk](http://ironbridgegorgewhs.co.uk)


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13. 

**JODRELL BANK WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Cheshire, North West England**

One of the world's leading radio astronomy observatories still in operation today, illustrates the transition from traditional optical astronomy of the 1940's to the use of radio astronomy in the 1960's. Take the train to Macclesfield or Goostrey from where travel either by bike or arranged taxi.

Nearest Station: **Goostrey**

◆ [jodrellbank.net](http://jodrellbank.net)


14. 

**MANCHESTER CITY OF LITERATURE, Greater Manchester**

Manchester was transformed by the Industrial Revolution and this can still be seen its railways, canals, museums, historic libraries and regenerated mills. Manchester is also home to iconic writers and radicals who tell the story of transformation and the fight for equality: Elizabeth Gaskell, Emmeline Pankhurst, Lemn Sissay, Carol Ann Duffy and more.

Nearest Station: **Manchester**

◆ [manchestercityofliterature.com/](http://manchestercityofliterature.com/)


15. 

**MANCHESTER CITY OF LEARNING, Greater Manchester**

Manchester is a UNESCO City of Lifelong Learning. Many of the great institutions of learning in Manchester grew from the wealth generated by the Industrial Revolution and the research and learning the enabled underpinned its innovation and invention. Historic libraries, campus buildings and museums with art, exhibits and learning events about the Industrial Revolution are open for visits.

Nearest Station: **Manchester**

◆ <https://unesco.org.uk/our-network/learning-cities/manchester>

16. 

**NEW LANARK WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Scotland**

An 18th Century Village set in a picturesque landscape where the Utopian and philanthropist Robert Owen moulded a model industrial community. The Village is accessible via a bus connection direct to the Visitor Centre from Lanark train station. Change at Glasgow Central for services to Lanark.

Nearest Station: **Lanark**

◆ [bit.ly/newlanarkscotwhs](http://bit.ly/newlanarkscotwhs)

17. 

**NOTTINGHAM CITY OF LITERATURE, Nottinghamshire**

Nottingham was designated a City of Literature in 2015 and is a vibrant and welcoming city of historical, cultural and literary significance. It is most famous for the legend of Robin Hood. Nottingham was once the centre of the world's lace industry and it still creates and sells world-famous lace, including the royal baby shawls from G.H. Hurt and Son made using historic hand-knitting frames.

Nearest Station: **Nottingham**

◆ [nottinghamcityofliterature.com/](http://nottinghamcityofliterature.com/)

18. 





**NORTH PENNINES GLOBAL GEOPARK, County Durham, Cumbria, and Northumberland**

The North Pennines National Landscape and UNESCO Global Geopark covers almost 2000 km<sup>2</sup>. It is a stunning landscape of open heather moors and peatlands, attractive dales and hay meadows, tumbling upland rivers, rare and distinctive wildlife, welcoming communities and intriguing imprints of a mining and industrial past, all underpinned by world-class geology.

Nearest Station: **Darlington/Hexham/Appleyby**

◆ [northpennines.org.uk/](http://northpennines.org.uk/)

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19.



## PONTCYSYLTE AQUEDUCT AND CANAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE, North East Wales

Conceived by civil engineer Thomas Telford, the aqueduct and canal stretching across 18-km symbolises the Industrial Revolution with its completion in the early 19th Century. Connecting National Rail Network stations are at Chirk and Ruabon. From here use local bus services or explore any station along the Llangollen Heritage Railway.

Nearest Station: **Ruabon**

♦ [pontcysyllte-aqueduct.co.uk](http://pontcysyllte-aqueduct.co.uk)

20.

## SALTAIRE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, West Yorkshire

This well-preserved industrial village is an intact example of Victorian philanthropic paternalism which had an important impact on the developments of social welfare across the UK. Built around a textile mill on the River Aire, Saltaire Village is accessible by bike and foot along the Leeds and Liverpool Canal path or direct by train.

Nearest Station: **Saltaire**

♦ [www.visitbradford.com/Explore/Saltaire](http://www.visitbradford.com/Explore/Saltaire)

21.



## STUDLEY ROYAL & THE RUINS OF FOUNTAINS ABBEY WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Yorkshire

The elegant 18th century water gardens of Studley Royal lead to the ruins of Fountains Abbey, both of which share the landscape with the Studley Royal deer park. Alight at Harrogate, continuing to Ripon by bus, then pick up the DalesBus to the estate. Cyclists can follow the Way of the Roses coast-to-coast cycle route, while walkers can enjoy the scenic 'Fountains Way' from Ripon to Studley Royal.

Nearest Station: **Harrogate**

♦ [bit.ly/ntstudleywhs](http://bit.ly/ntstudleywhs)

22.



## THE SLATE LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Northwest Wales

This post-industrial landscape shows the evolution of an agricultural landscape to one dominated by the slate industry. Slate quarries transformed elements of the physical landscape; towns, villages and communities which developed in and around quarrying areas are Welsh language strongholds to this day. Transport links exported slate to UK and global markets.

Public train stations include: **Blaenau Ffestiniog, Tywyn, Porthmadog.**

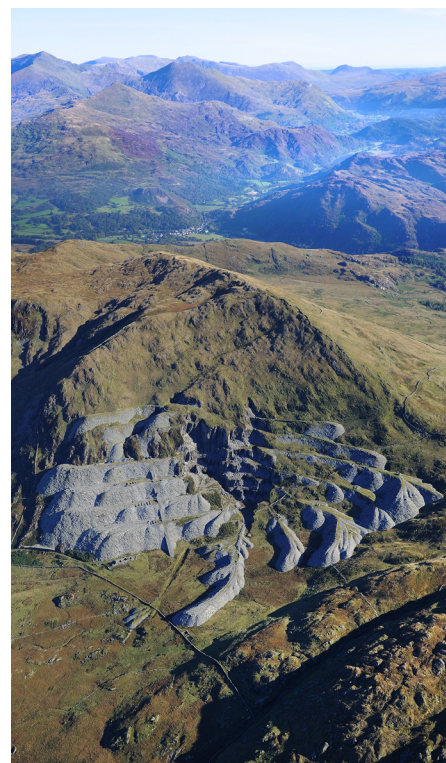
♦ [llechi.cymru](http://llechi.cymru)



IRONBRIDGE GORGE



CORNWALL AND WEST DEVON MINING LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE



THE SLATE LANDSCAPE OF NORTHWEST WALES

### KEY TO SYMBOLS

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# FURTHER INFORMATION

To start planning your journey, find out about rail times and fares here:

NATIONAL RAIL



[nationalrail.co.uk](https://nationalrail.co.uk)

To find out more about UNESCO designations in the UK see here:

UNESCO



[unesco.org.uk/our-network](https://unesco.org.uk/our-network)

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WORLD HERITAGE UK



[worldheritageuk.org/  
industrial-heritage/](https://worldheritageuk.org/industrial-heritage/)

The designations are recognised by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) as places of international significance whose values transcend national boundaries and are of importance for future generations.

Being designated is a high accolade and demonstrates international recognition of the designations' significance. Countries with designations give an understanding to UNESCO to manage them and to ensure they are sustained into the future.



**unesco**

United Kingdom  
National Commission  
for UNESCO



**World  
Heritage UK**



[worldheritageuk.org/industrial-heritage/](http://worldheritageuk.org/industrial-heritage/)

# MORE INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO UNESCO SITES IN THE UK

- ◆ **Who is UNESCO?** UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, was founded in 1945 after World War Two ended. Its mission is to promote peace, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information.
- ◆ **Where are the UK's UNESCO Industrial Designations?** As the map overleaf shows, UNESCO Industrial designations in the UK include 14 World Heritage Sites, 1 Tentative List World Heritage Site, 3 Creative Cities, 1 Learning City and 3 Global Geoparks. More detailed information on their location and accessibility can be found on the website links in this leaflet.
- ◆ **What are the benefits to the UK of UNESCO Designations?** The UK National Commission supports the UK's contribution to UNESCO and brings the benefits of UNESCO to the UK. By raising awareness of the world's most special places, we encourage more people to discover the UK's extraordinary culture and heritage. These are summarised in this leaflet and more detailed descriptions and suggestions for visitors can be found for each on the website links given.

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE, Central England

Cover image shows  
BLACK COUNTRY GEOPARK, West Midlands

