

2 Walks Around Murton

History and Nature

This leaflet was researched and designed by pupils from The Ribbon Academy, Murton.

The aim of these self-guided walks is to encourage visitors and local people to go for a walk and explore the environment at the same time. This leaflet covers the history of Murton and also some of the nature that surrounds the village. It is hoped that visitors and locals will be inspired by what they see and experience and perhaps be encouraged to find out more about their surroundings.

Enjoy your walk!

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By Year 5
The Ribbon Academy
Murton



Preparing for the walks

We have created two walks. On **walk 1** (black) we looked at the history of Murton. On **walk 2** (red) we looked at nature in Murton.

Walk 1 (black) is approximately 1.36 Miles (2.19 km) and will take about 45 minutes.

Walk 2 (red) is approximately 1 mile and should last about 25 minutes.

Wear suitable clothing; sturdy footwear such as trainers or walking boots; warm clothing in cold weather and waterproofs and wellies in wet weather. Bring along binoculars if you want a closer look and a camera to take pictures to remember your walk.

Beware of traffic, fly tipping and other litter. There may be unsteady ground in some place so watch your footing!!

Follow the Green Cross and Countryside Codes to protect our countryside and yourself!!

Murton

History

Early in the 18th century Murton existed as a small farming hamlet but due to the development and creation of Murton Colliery the area became a rapidly expanding village.

Murton Colliery opened in 1838 and at its height employed some 3636 people. The colliery closed in 1991.

During the first and second world wars Murton suffered like many areas across County Durham and lost sons and fathers in the battles as well as people at home because of devastating bombing raids.

Nature

The wildlife of Murton is varied. Due to it's location and history the area could be said to be both urban and rural. As you walk you may spot the tracks and homes of some of the creatures that live in Murton.

These could include badgers, foxes, hares and rabbits, mice, voles, rats and many different species of birds.

The site of the former colliery is now a shopping centre and wildlife park called Dalton Park.

Nature

Fox

Foxes usually stay away from humans, but they can be seen around the countryside and in urban areas too where they often scavenge for food from rubbish bins. They are very protective of their young cubs.



Oak trees

Oak trees are one of the many species of trees that can be found in Murton. Oaks are a native tree and can live for over 300 years. You can often tell the age of a tree by it's width.

Ash trees

Ash trees are another native tree. They have inky black buds on their branches. Just recently they have suffered badly from a fungal disease. Trees provide a home for many animals including insects and birds. Trees also provide food such as berries and seeds for both humans and animals and play an important part in our lives.

Tawny owls

Tawny owls can be seen flying at night in search of rats, mice and voles to eat. They are a bird of prey with a razor sharp beak and talons. Owl pellets (containing bones, hair etc) can sometimes be found on the ground near fence posts in fields or under trees.



THE WALKS

Murton history walk

With your back to Ribbon Academy (1), turn left and walk past the Library. If you look to the right, you will see the site of the old County School (2) (1910-1978). The site is behind the original school red brick wall and is now a housing estate. Keep walking forwards and cross over Webb Avenue. Continue downhill. Keep walking towards the fields in front of you, before the fields you will see the Pit Wheel on your right. Cross over the road to the Pit Wheel (3). The Pit Wheel stands as a memorial to those who lost their lives working in the mines and as a reminder of how the collieries shaped the village.

Turn right at the pit wheel. Follow the path towards the shops, walk down to the bottom of the road then turn right at the Colliery Inn. Walk along past the butchers, you will see some houses on your right. Keep walking on past Church View old peoples home. Follow the path, Saint Joseph's church is on your right and the school is on the other side of the road.

When you get to the church, continue walking up Church Bank path you will finally reach the cenotaph (4). Facing the cenotaph, turn right and follow the road along Park Lane.

Continue around the bend, onto Barnes Road and all the way back to the school.

Murton nature walk

With your back to the school turn right. Then walk up Barnes Road until you reach Webb Avenue. When you reach Webb Avenue, travel down along the school gates until you reach the limestone rocks which are located near the wildlife garden (5).

Next to the garages you get a good view of the pond (6). Next go left and into the woods. Make sure you don't take the path under the power line. Then go up the hill, past the Ash trees.

Turn left at the tree stump and continue until you are at Davison Crescent. Turn left, walking straight on until the junctions. Turn left at the first junction and walk on. Go left and following the path until the end of the road and back to the school.

Stay alert for signs of wildlife as you take this walk. We found nests, mouse holes, animal droppings, nibbled leaves, heard birds and saw many insects and birds.



The cenotaph is very important to Murton. This is a good place to sit and think about the people whose names are inscribed on the memorial stone.



Woods Terrace has some traditional shops such as butchers, bakers, post office, and a hardware store.



Hares can be sometimes be seen in open fields around Murton.



Look out for some interesting buildings along Woods Terrace, with different styles of architecture. We saw these faces above the windows and interesting design above the hardware store.

Trees are very important and Murton has some very old trees. Look out for them along the way.



KEY

Murton History Walk

Murton Nature Walk