



Town Moor & Nuns Moor



What will I see?

A huge area of pasture land in the middle of a city, much larger than Central Park in New York; and Hyde Park and Hampstead Heath combined. The Freemen of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne have the right to graze cattle on these moors. They are one of the very few places where you can see evidence of the mining of coal in the city whose name is synonymous the world over with coal! Because of this, part of the moor has been designated as a Local Geological Site.

How old is it?

The coal seams mined underneath the moor are Carboniferous and are around 312 million years old. The mining here may have started as early as the 14th century. In the 18th and 19th centuries mining was extensive by bell pits and then pillar and stall methods.

Did you know?

That the very uneven surface of Nuns Moor west of Grandstand Road is caused by old coal workings and their collapse - subsidence. As recently as the Second World War, over 340,000 m² of coal was mined by opencast methods in the northern parts of the moors.

Why it is here?

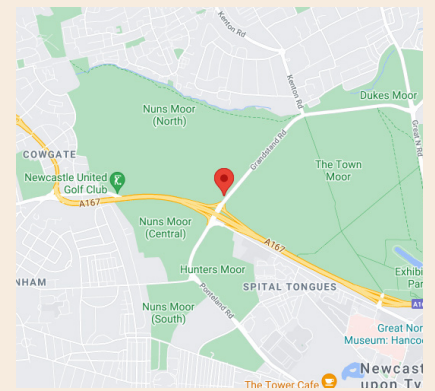
The coal seam that directly underlies the moors is called the High Main seam. It is a very thick coal – sometimes exceeding 2 metres. That thickness and the fact that it was so close to the surface made it very attractive to men wishing to mine coal.

And wildlife?

The Moor is mainly agricultural grassland, supporting cattle and there is also some woodland. Open country birds include skylark, and in winter waders such as golden plover. In the woodland are willow warbler, chiffchaff and blackcap.

Where is it?

Just a short walk north of Newcastle city centre [NZ233663].



Want to know more?

- Town Moor Field Record
- NNP Geodiversity Audit
- Onshore GeoIndex
- iGeology
- Geological history of Northumbria
- Carboniferous rocks

