



# Lindisfarne



## What will I see?

Many things! In the small island that is Lindisfarne, there are lots of rocky places to visit, but we have decided to focus on the Whin Dyke, a hard igneous rock and part of the Whin Sill suite of rocks. Why? Because without it there would have been no Hermitage on St Cuthbert's island, no settlement of the Heugh, and no site for the castle. In fact the Whin Dyke is a fundamental reason for Lindisfarne's existence and heritage.

## How old is it?

The Whin Dyke was injected into the 330 million year old Carboniferous limestones and sandstones 295 million years ago. While these two sets of rocks may create the foundation of Lindisfarne, the shape of the island today is very much influenced by much more recent wind blown sand dunes which are less than 6,000 years old.

## Did you know?

As well as seeing the Whin Dyke – search out where it cuts like a black blade through fossiliferous limestone on the foreshore south of the Heugh – you can visit some of the largest limekilns in Northumberland near the castle and then walk north to see the limestone rock which they quarried near Nessend. Look out for the beautiful folds – troughs and domes - in the rocks at Snipe Point.

## Why it is here?

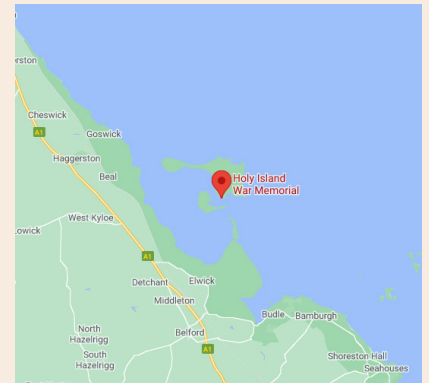
The Whin Dyke is dolerite, just like the Whin Sill, and is extremely hard. It was once molten, around 1,200°C, and was injected vertically into local rocks and then cooled.

## And wildlife?

An orchid found nowhere else in the world – Lindisfarne helleborine.

## Where is it?

Where is it? Just off the coast, south of Berwick upon Tweed and north of Alnwick [NU129420]. You can only reach it when the tides are right.



## Want to know more?

- NNP Geodiversity Audit
- Onshore GeoIndex
- iGeology
- Geological history of Northumbria
- Carboniferous rocks

