

A TOUR OF BOWES RAILWAY MUSEUM IN SPRINGWELL

Margaret Bozic has arranged for us to have a tour around Bowes Railway Museum on Tuesday 23rd April 2024.

Bowes Railway Co, first known as Springwell colliery and railway was built to carry coal from

Springwell and other pits in north west Durham to the Tyne at Jarrow. The earliest section was designed by George Stephenson and opened on 17 January 1826, making it one of the world's first modern railways. It was 15 miles long when completed in 1855. Each end was locomotive worked; the six mile middle section consisting of rope worked inclines with very steep gradients.

Between 1968 and 1974, most of the line was closed until only the last 3.5 miles between Monkton and Jarrow staithes were operated by the National Coal Board. However, the original 1826 section between the Black Fell bank head and Springwell bank head was acquired for preservation in 1976 by Tyne and Wear County Council. This included Blackham's Hill West and East inclines, which had been operated by a stationary haulage engine, thought to be the only preserved standard gauge rope hauled railway in the world.

In 2017 Bowes Railway was awarded Accredited Museum status. The railway no longer runs.

We will meet at 10.30 in the car park for a tour which will last for one and a half hours. Afterwards tea and coffee will be available. There are toilets on the site. The cost is £5 and to be paid on the day. Please wear sensible footwear as the paths can be rough on the site.

There is a large carpark signposted off the B1288 Springwell Road, north of Springwell Village towards Wrekenton. The postcode is NE9 7QJ. And this is where we will meet.

The X1 and the 56 buses stop in Springwell Village and it is a five minute walk to the site. From Chester le Street it might be best to catch the X21 to Gateshead Interchange and then the X1 or the 56 to Springwell.

Numbers are limited to 15 people. Please could you email Margaret if you would like to join us: