

# westpark Street names

Westpark is an award-winning development on the outskirts of Darlington combining housing, schools, retail, and parkland into a new community. Since 2000, a key part of its identity has been an arts strategy which has commissioned sculpture, designed signage, and named new streets.

Artwork in the residential area takes the form of original streetnames accompanied by short verses placed on each street sign. There are six main areas of housing across the whole site, each with a theme relating to the industrial, agricultural, cultural, archaeological, or ecological history of Darlington and the surrounding area. The latest phase has three themes: *Mines and Dams of Teesdale and Weardale, Charles Dickens and the Arts, Archaeology and the Teesdale Assemblage.*

The text is designed to be read many times, whether glanced at in passing or reflected upon at leisure. Each street sign can be read by itself, or as part of a connecting narrative. This reflects how we gradually absorb information from all signage – deepening our involvement when we feel receptive, passing by when we do not.

## Mines & Dams

Lead mining has been a Teesdale industry since Roman times. As with the railways, innovative minds of the Industrial Revolution like Thomas Sopwith devised ways to increase production. From the late nineteenth century onward, it became important to supply industry and a growing population with clean water. Over seventy years, engineers like James Mansergh and Julius Kennard designed a series of dams which accomplished this, but their civic goal later clashed with conservation of the dales' unique ecology.



### Mansergh Road

The Manserghs, man and son, conceived dams in the dale for Tees' relief.

### Hury Way

From Broken Scar, then Blackton and Hury, came water for all, clear and unhurried.

### Balderhead Street

From Grassholme, Selset, Balderhead the dale was made one watershed.

### Kennard Road

Kennard was a hard-nosed man – conserving flora was not his plan.

### Dine Holm

Kennard proposed: fill it to the brink – households must wash, and industries drink.

### Cow Green Lane

Where Teesdale's gentians once assembled now only the reservoir's wavetops tremble.

### Thomas Sopwith Way

Sopwith saw through stone to lead and modelled the minerals under our tread.

### Galena Lane

Lead in the veins of the dales brought wealth though miners' lungs be robbed of health.

### Middlehope Way

*Hush and wheel-pit, buddle and leat:* words rest like shafts beneath our feet.

### Killhope Crescent

Lead into gold: old Alchemy's trope performed each day by the mine at Killhope.

### Spar Box Close

Let miners' minerals endure as spar-box worlds in miniature.

### Smithsonite Street

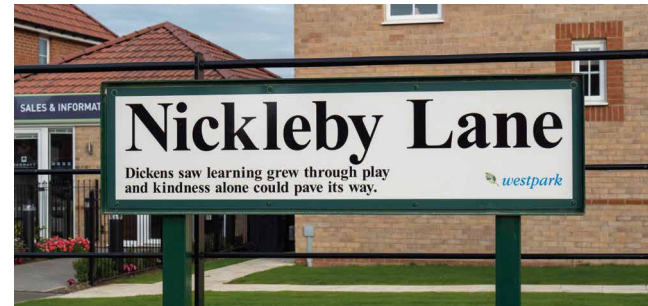
James found zinc spar's true constitution; founded truth's largest institution.

### Nenthead End

Highest village on the Pennine's spine and deepest ballroom: dance in the mine!

## Dickens & The Arts

The Teesdale area has long been both home and inspiration to the arts, including Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), whose Jabberwock, based on the Sockburn Worm, is celebrated throughout Westpark. Charles Dickens' novel *Nicholas Nickleby* is set nearby, as is Sir Walter Scott's poem *Rokeby*, which inspired both Turner and the Russian composer Glinka. Local eighteenth century composer John Garth retired to Cockerton after a long association with Charles Avison, who was a pioneer of classical music performances in Newcastle and Durham cathedrals.



### Dodgson Drive

That nonsense was born in Croft-on-Tees at least the Cheshire Cat agrees.

### Logic Lane

While logic alone would drive you mad, the Hatter might ask where some could be had?

### Looking Glass Lane

'On which side of the looking glass did Alice live?' The answer? 'Pass.'

### Lewis Carroll Close

A logician lost to introspection might wonder which was his reflection?

### Venus View

The *Rokeby Venus*, in her mirror, secretly eyes her secret admirer.

### Walter Scott Avenue

To fund a castle, Scott wrote a poem, but *Rokeby* furnished more than a home.

### Rokeby Road

Scott's romance like a rumour survives: by rivers its views and its melodies thrive.

### Turner's View

Turner piled Greta onto Tees, creating anew how our world sees.

### Glinka Grove

Because the Russians love their Scott Glinka composed to *Rokeby's* plot.

### Avison Grove

Cathedrals, like radios of the North, heard Avison pour his music forth.

### John's Garth

In Cockerton, Garth's concerti flowed till, composing himself, he set down his bow.

### Balaguer Grove

He named the Eixample's streets in a year – yet Victor's tribute's not there, but here.

### Gilroy Grove

The Guinness ad artist, to settle a debt, painted a bar where Dickens' folk met.

### Nickleby Lane

Dickens saw learning grew through play and kindness alone could pave its way.

### Newman's Walk

This original ragged philanthropist though eccentric of gait would rush to assist.

### Smike Wynd

Hard knocks might have skewed poor Smike but his heart was greater than all despite.

### Browdie Road

North Yorkshire yeomen, like to John, are blokey, broad – and dependable on.

### Dickens' Drive

Charles, knowing poverty's as cruel as cruelty, made both writing's fuel.

### Linkinwater Lane

Keeping the books kept Tim in a wage content as his blackbird, in its cage.

### Cheeryble Chare

Charity's twins, old Charles and Ned, gave cheerily – thus was Nicholas wed.

## Archaeology & The Assemblage

Among the unique assets of the dales are the rare plants and flowers known as the Teesdale Assemblage, carefully recorded by horticulturists from James Backhouse to Dr Margaret Bradshaw. Historically, the Darlington area has sat on a main route since before the advance of the legions, and traces of both the Romans and local tribe the Brigantes are plentiful. Medieval sites are no less rich, for instance in nearby Archdeacon Newton. (More streets will acquire archaeological names as this latest phase develops).



### Black Poplar Avenue

Slow burning poplar: a popular wood medieval matchstick men thought good.

### The Assemblage

Catalogued by careful labours: the high dales' hopes, our own rare neighbours.

### Globe Flower Close

Tees' *double dumplings*: buttery worlds are in their meadows' sweet selves furled.

### Cranesbill Lane

The crane's beak, dipped in washy ink, pleads where it can: pause, and think.

### Lady's Mantle Lane

There's alchemy in her Latin label, this large-toothed leaf that's almost fable.

### Pennycress Lane

Beside the lead-mine, pennycress is nursed upon the spoil heap's dress.

### Rockrose Gardens

Only the sugar limestone fell suits the stubborn rockrose well.

### Eyebright Way

Eyebright in ale would cure all ill – glimpse it in hay-meads by Cow Green still.

### Saxifrage Way

Saxifrage, clonal if left alone: porcelain-white at Egglestone.

### Viola Wynd

The Teesdale violet thrives on the edge of fell-sides, survives in Widdybank's wedge.

### Hawksbeard Walk

Ragged-leafed dandy, shaken awake to a district of reservoirs, not lakes.

### Juniper Avenue

To twist itself each juniper tree will take its own tart century.

### Gentian Close

When you climb past Cauldron Snout, seek the star-faced gentians out.

### Iceflower Lane

This petal alphabet, long kept by Tees: our ice age manuscript.

### Mortimer Wheeler Drive

In digs from Harappa to Wheeler's Wall he found the foundations supporting us all.

### Turf Maze (Dalby)



### Black Poplar



Roman pottery



A1(M)  
Junction 58

Tessdale violet



Grotto (Aysgarth)



Archaeology &  
The Assemblage



Spring gentian



Jabberwock



Dickens &  
The Arts

Education,  
Sports &  
Community

Westpark  
Village Centre



Cow Green  
Play Park

Westpark

Mines  
& Dams

Westpark  
Hospital

Barnard Castle Railway Track Bed

