

# **apedale** *Heritage Centre*

## **Education Pack**



*welcome to a special learning experience ...*



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**01782 565050 (day time) | 07837 225790 (booking)**

**info@apedale.co.uk**



# Apedale Heritage Centre Key Information

- The Apedale Heritage Centre staff offer authentic guided underground and museum tours to school groups, relevant to Key stages 2, 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum.
- Apedale Heritage Centre is located on the border of Apedale Community Country Park, Loomer Road, Chesterton Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 7LB.
- For booking school visits Monday to Friday, please call 07837 225790.
- The cost of the school tour is £85 for up to 40 children. For larger groups, add a charge of £2.50 for each additional child.
- Free parking for Coach or mini buses next to the Apedale Heritage Centre.



We hope you find this pack  
informative and interesting

If you have any comments about the brochure  
please do not hesitate to contact us  
on **07837 225790**



# Welcome to the Apedale Heritage Centre

## ***Introduction***

In the late 1990s, Apedale footrail coal mine ceased trading and faced closure. Fortunately, a plan was put forward to save some of the underground workings and to turn them into a tourist attraction and education service.

We offer schools an excellent educational package linked to the National Curriculum, along with an interesting and informative museum, a welcoming café and the surrounding countryside of Apedale Community Country Park.

This experience is like no other, as pupils actually have a guided tour underground and are surrounded by the unique atmosphere of a real coal mine that was once the daily workplace for hundreds of miners.

## ***The Education Programme***

Close to the Heritage Centre, in the Country Park, is the only visible coal seam in Staffordshire above ground. It is called "Cannel Row" and shows the angle of the seams below ground.

Much of the history of Apedale is associated with the extraction of its minerals - in particular, coal, iron ore, sand and clay (marl), four of the main ingredients that powered the Industrial Revolution. Industries based on these minerals, such as mining, ironworking, quarrying and brick and tile manufacture grew and led to rises in the local population.



History comes alive during an unforgettable journey of discovery that starts over 300 million years ago with the formation of coal, through the Roman Invasion of Britain in AD43, the impact of the Industrial Revolution and the post-industrial changes of recent years.

The education sessions at the Heritage Centre consist of two guided tours (mine and museum). Both tours include hands-on sessions for students. There is also an optional extra session of a Country Park tour, showing the landscape restored from opencast coal mining. This does require a small additional cost. Please discuss this when booking.

There is also an optional extra of an industrial railway tour; the recently opened Apedale Valley Light Railway is available as a separate visit that you might like to add to your booking with the Heritage Centre. Please contact the Moseley Railway Trust on 0161 4949091 or [www.mrt.org.uk](http://www.mrt.org.uk), for more details.

Staff from the school accompany the pupils down the mine and on the other tours and talks.

*"The guided mine tour is a very special experience that cannot be replicated"*

These sessions are aimed at key stages 2, 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum, which states:

*"History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time"*

Here at Apedale, we encourage pupils to develop their research skills, to ask questions and make use of all available resources. We help in every way possible to tailor the sessions to the school's requirements and thus enhance their studies with the National Curriculum.

After a short welcome and introductory talk, your group, depending on size, will be split into smaller groups for the tours.



# The Museum Tour

(Duration 60 minutes)



## ***Areas of interest***

- Local Roman history display
- Mines Rescue van and equipment
- First aid room
- Tools of the trade
- Miner's cottage and back yard
- The Story of Coal and Fossils
- Industrial narrow gauge locomotives
- The cost of mining in human terms
- The brick and tile industry
- Local social history

## ***A Journey of Discovery***

The museum itself consists of displays explaining the history of Apedale and the surrounding area. These cover the formation of coal, its extraction, fossils, the local Roman fort and town and the life and work of local miners from the Victorian period to modern times.

Other displays include a Mines Rescue vehicle, a detailed model of a drift mine, several industrial locomotives, mining photographs, documents, tools and many other artefacts. The lower part of a wall from an important local Roman building, and authentic reproductions of an early miner's cottage and mine "ambulance" room are of particular interest.

The display and talk, along with a 'hands-on' session with artefacts, help to bring the rich history of the area to life. Our tours can be tailored to your specific requirements, please discuss this when you make your booking.

The Apedale area lends itself very well to a local history study as part of Key Stage 2 or 3 history work.

Staff on the Museum tour will encourage pupils to collect research material that would help them to complete:-

- A study over time tracing how several aspects of national history are reflected in the locality, for example WWII
- A study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period before 1066 that is significant in the locality, for example, the Roman settlement.

Pupils could study an aspect or theme in British history that extends their chronological knowledge since 1066:-

- A significant turning point in British history, for example, the first railways or the Battle of Britain
- A study of an aspect of social history, such as how people were affected by the Industrial Revolution

### ***Possible post-visit activities***

Making a mosaic of the school badge or a local landmark, drawing Roman soldiers, forts and buildings, hold a discussions on invasion, settlement, or the differences between the Celts and the Romans.



## The Underground Tour (Duration 60 minutes)

### Areas of interest

- Safety talk
- Warwick Safety Device
- Shot Firing Display
- Coal and Ironstone Seams
- Tools and Machinery
- Fan and ventilation doors
- Deployment Area
- Pit Bottom
- Pillar and Stall
- Coal face cutter
- Cage and Signals
- Coal gallery
- Surface displays
  - The blacksmiths shop
  - Winding engine
  - Coal grading area
  - Eimco coal loading shovel



Apedale is a drift mine, where the coal workings are reached on foot down an inclined, rather than a vertical, shaft. Mine tours start with everyone being kitted out and "lamped up" in the Lamp Room - this gives pupils a real hands-on event as pupils wear the same equipment as the Mine Guide.

They also gain the experience of talking to former mine workers, for a real opportunity to empathise with their life stories. Before entering the mine, the importance of the contraband rules, good ventilation, and methods of moving coal and other materials with a powerful haulage engine are explained.

The fully-trained guide will then take you through an actual coal and ironstone seam that was, until the 1990s the daily work place for many local hard working miners. The various methods of coal extraction are described, and the group will have opportunities to take part in hands-on demonstrations. In addition, they learn about the friendships, hardships and dangers of working underground.

The informative talk and tour by one of our expert guides will greatly enhance pupils' understanding of Key Stage 2 topics such as Geography and Local History as well as giving them increased knowledge of the history of Coal Mining and its communities.



## ***You will need warm clothing and sensible footwear***

As this is a real coal mine, it can be cooler underground, with uneven surfaces.

## ***Contraband Rules***

By law, certain items that could cause a spark underground are termed "Contraband" and have to be handed in for safe keeping before going underground.

## ***Brief overview of Tour***

After everyone has been kitted out and lamped up in the Lamp Room, the miner's pit check system is explained. The guide then demonstrates the use of the self-rescuer, the Flame Safety Lamp and Electronic "Mentor" Gas Detector.

Before entering the mine, the Engine House is pointed out. This houses a winding engine which was used to haul full tubs of coal or waste to the surface. At the entrance to the mine, an important feature of the tour is an explanation of the Warwick safety device. Moving into the mine the manholes are pointed out. These were used as a safe refuge while tubs were moving past. The importance of good ventilation is also explained.

The tour moves on past the electricity panels at the bottom of the incline, which were used to drive a wide range of power tools, pumps and winding gear to remove coal from the pit face. Several roadways, after being stripped of coal, have been closed up for safety reasons. An explanation of the purpose of 'Stopping' is given by the guide. Other underground areas connected to the Apedale mine are pointed out such as the old workings in the Bassey Mine, particularly the steepness of the roadway and how the miners accessed this.



Other, more traditional working methods such as "Pillar and Stall" are explained at the authentic coal seam and supports.

As the pit was a working mine, many of the tools, machinery and infrastructure still remain, such as the Rise Workings and Belt End in No.3 Return Dip.

Tools used for shot firing are exhibited, and pupils at this point will be able to get hands-on experience of the explosives and detonators used (please note all explosives and detonators are dummy models and are perfectly safe). Other artefacts such as a large coal cutter and belt system for coal removal, along with the cage and the method of signals used for its operation are also explained throughout the tour.

### ***Possible Post-Visit Activities***

- Put together a school performance or display on your visit that includes
  - What is coal?
  - How was it formed and when?
  - How has it been mined?
- Develop a Play
  - A short play written by the pupils and titled 'Children in the mine', or
  - A play based on a local mining disaster.
- An interview with an ex-miner.



## Optional Extras

### ***Country Park Walk***

The Apedale Valley has its own extremely interesting history and environment. Subject areas which can benefit include Information Technology (online research), History, Geography, Science and Art. Combined tours can be booked through the Heritage Centre, please ask for details when booking.

Apedale Community Country Park is a unique landscape full of historical and wildlife interest, just waiting to be explored. It extends to almost 455 acres of woodland, wetland and meadow. Whilst walking in these beautiful surroundings you will come across echoes of the past, reminders of the coal mines, railways, canal, blast furnaces and brickworks that once thrived in the valley.

Including this as part of your tour would help your pupils to develop their geographical skills and fieldwork. In particular, they can use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods.

To add the above option to your tour please call the booking line and ask for details on: **07837 225790**.

### ***Industrial Railway Tour***

The recently opened Apedale Valley Light Railway is available as a separate tour. Please contact the Moseley Railway Trust on **0161 494 9091**, for details.

"From early mining applications and experiments on country estates, the industrial narrow gauge railway came of age during the First World War when it provided the logistical support to armies on all sides and in the theatres of the conflict".



# Cross-Curricular Themes and Research Opportunities

## **Geography**

*"As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments"*

There are many other subject areas that will benefit from a visit to the Heritage Centre, including human geography, where pupils can learn to describe and understand key, including:-

- types of settlement and land use.
- economic activity including trade links.
- the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.

## **Science**

A visit to the Heritage Centre will help pupils to explore different kinds of rocks and soils, including those in the local environment. Gasses encountered in mines are explained.

Following on from and inspired by their visit pupils might find out about people who have developed useful new materials, for example John Dunlop, Charles Macintosh or John McAdam.

## **Design technology**

*"Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world"*

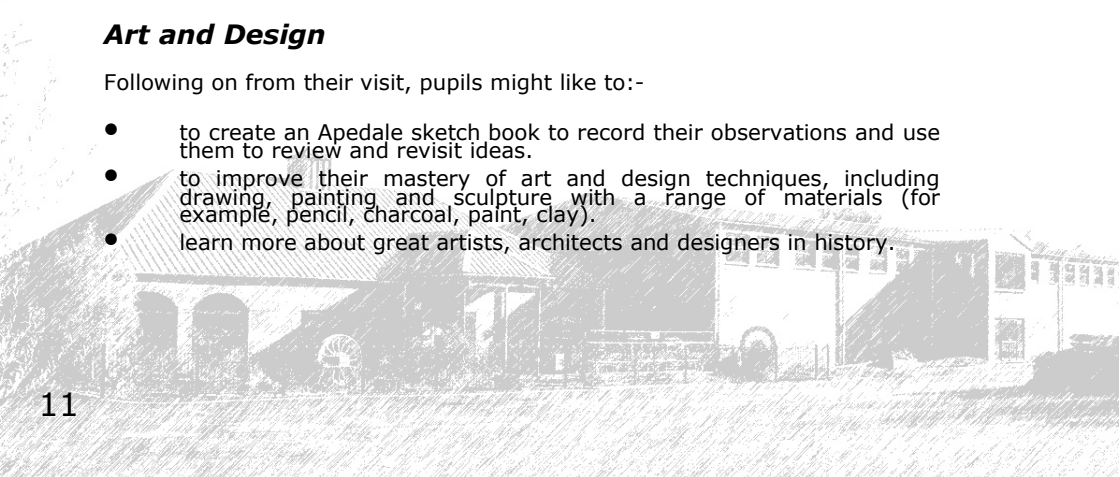
Following on from their visit pupils might like to try and design, then make a series of bricks or roofing tiles. They can then evaluate their ideas and products against their own design criteria and consider the views of others to improve their work

They may also understand how key events and individuals in design and technology have helped shape the world particularly the importance of local brick and tile manufacturers such as G.H. Downing Ltd.

## **Art and Design**

Following on from their visit, pupils might like to:-

- to create an Apedale sketch book to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas.
- to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials (for example, pencil, charcoal, paint, clay).
- learn more about great artists, architects and designers in history.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## ***Information for Party Organisers***

Party organisers are offered a free preliminary visit to the Heritage Centre to see our facilities and to receive help with the planning of their tour(s). Alternatively, we can arrange a visit to your school by one of our experienced volunteers. Many find this helpful and it is an opportunity to discuss any special requirements you may have. To take advantage of this offer, please contact our booking office on 07837 225790.

## ***Your questions answered...***

### ***1) Where are you?***

The Heritage Centre is near to Chesterton, 3 miles North of Newcastle-Under-Lyme in Staffordshire. Brown tourist signs guide you to the Apedale Valley. Pass the Stoke Speedway stadium in Loomer Road, and at the end of the road enter the Apedale Community Country Park. We are located 250 metres from the park entrance. There is a free coach and car park as you approach the Heritage Centre.

### ***2) How many pupils can I bring?***

In order to provide a high quality experience, we may need to divide very large groups over more than one visit. This will be discussed when booking.

### ***3) How many adults do I need to bring?***

For children under the age of eight years, we request a 1:8 ratio. For children aged eight years and over, a ratio of 1:10 is requested.

### ***4) What safeguards are in place?***

Copies of our Risk Assessment and Public Liability Insurance documents are available on request.

### ***5) What about access for the disabled?***

Wheelchair access is possible in the café and museum. There are also some wheelchair friendly paths in the Country Park.

### ***6) Can we have our lunch?***

In fine weather the Schools area in the Country Park is available for picnics. Alternatively, one end of the café can be used. We respectfully request that adult supervision is maintained in the café, and that there are only a few pupils at the counter at any one time. Please note that the café is also open to the general public, and we ask that pupils behave accordingly.

### ***7) Where are the toilets?***

There are toilets (including disabled facilities) in the café. Please note that mine tours last for 60 minutes and there are no facilities underground.

**8) Where can the children leave their coats?**

The conference room is usually available. We recommend that children do not leave valuable items unattended (the Heritage Centre cannot accept any responsibility for loss or damage to belongings).

**9) Can pupils buy anything from the shop?**

The shop stocks a variety of souvenirs, prices ranging from 50 pence upwards. It will be open to the school at the end of the tours before pupils board the return vehicle.

**10) Do you provide any outreach to schools?**

Outreach sessions can be arranged, which include artefact handling. Please contact our booking office for details and prices.

**11) How do I book a visit?**

Bookings can be arranged through our booking office on: 07837 225790. A non-refundable deposit of £20 is required. A booking enquiry form is available on our website at [www.apedale.co.uk](http://www.apedale.co.uk).

**12) How do I pay?**

The balance is payable on invoice. There is no charge for teachers and adult helpers.

**13) Who do I need to contact for more information?**

For information about prices or any of the tours, please contact the booking office on **07837 225790**. We will be pleased to discuss any queries or concerns you may have. You can also e-mail us [info@apedale.co.uk](mailto:info@apedale.co.uk) or visit our website at [www.apedale.co.uk](http://www.apedale.co.uk)

**12) Are you on Social Media?**

Yes we have an active twitter account (@apedaleheritage) and a facebook account (facebook.com/apedale), both are regularly updated with news. Feel free to follow and like us.

# Policies and Procedures

## ***The Apedale Heritage Centre Staff comply with the following policies***

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Sexual Discrimination Act
- The Race Relations Act 1976 & The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

Apedale Heritage Centre also has its own Policy and Procedures documents which cover Equal Opportunities, Racial Discrimination and Health and Safety.

## ***Please note***

Mine tours are governed by the current Mines and Quarries Act. The mine is inspected for safety before every tour, weekly by the Mine Manager and annually by the Mines Inspector.

## ***Feedback***

When you leave we hope that it is as friends of the Heritage Centre and that you pass on the experiences you have had. We welcome any feedback as we are continually aspiring to improve our service and facilities. A feedback form for schools is available for you to use after a visit.

## ***Acknowledgements***

We would like to express our gratitude to the following people for their valuable contributions and hard work in compiling this education pack:-

Barrie Collinson, Les Mason, Apedale Heritage Centre members and friends past and present who have contributed their skills and knowledge to this important document.

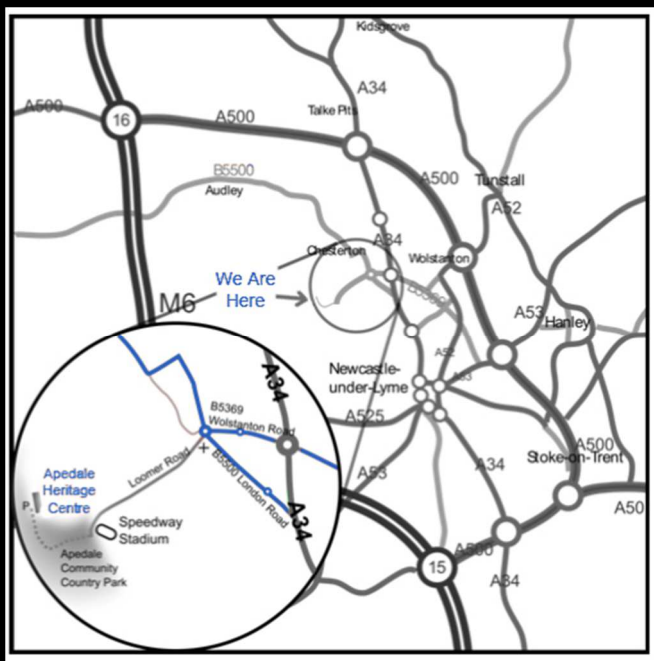
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**[www.aprillewisconsultancy.co.uk](http://www.aprillewisconsultancy.co.uk)**



# How to Find Us



The Heritage Centre is easily accessible; just follow the Apedale Valley brown signs. At the end of Loomer Road enter the Apedale Community Country Park; we are located 250 metres from the park entrance with free parking.

For further information why not look at our website:

[www.apedale.co.uk](http://www.apedale.co.uk)

The Apedale Heritage Centre reserves the right to change without notice the information and prices contained in this Education pack and vary the programme of demonstrations and exhibits.

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**Loomer Road, Chesterton**  
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