



Bus day-trippers Lynne and George Hedley.

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A look at two 60-somethings who know how to rock a day out by the sea

Hello, my name is Lynne Hedley and this is my husband George. We are in our 60s, newly-semi-retired and making the most of this wonderful thing called the bus pass.

We live in Chester-le-Street and have embarked on an exciting new chapter – exploring every aspect of our wonderful region, by bus.

I often share photos and tales from our bus adventures on my Facebook page

and I have fast built-up a following of friends who love to hear about our trips.

So, in the spirit of spreading our joyful journeys further and wider, I have taken Go North East up on their offer to publish our latest bus escapade on their online newsroom.

I hope you enjoy reading it as much and me and George enjoyed the trip...

Lynne and George's Whitley Bay bus adventure

Today the sun is shining so we thought - let's get beside the sea! We headed on foot to our nearest bus stop in Chester-le-Street and hopped on a Go North East 21 Angel bus heading to the Gateshead Interchange.

At the bus station we headed over to Stand C to board the no 1 Coaster service to Whitley Bay. It's a fairly big Interchange but we didn't have any trouble finding where we needed to go to catch our bus. There are big destination boards to show you where you need to be to connect to your desired location. And if you get stuck there's always a supervisor there to ask if you need guidance. For Coaster times and route map click [here](#).

The journey from Gateshead took just over an hour which allowed us to sit back and relax and take in the local scenery. The bus has free wifi so if you can't go for 60 minutes without checking your emails and tweets, you're in the right place. Me? I prefer peace and quiet and looking out of the window.

The bus passed through Newcastle, Byker, Wallsend, North Shields, Tynemouth and Cullercoats before arriving in the town centre of Whitley Bay.

It's a pleasant place with nice shops and with the weather being so good, lots of pavement cafes and pubs were alive and buzzing with people so we enjoyed a drink and a bite to eat and watched the world go by.

Whitley Bay sea front is currently under construction as part of a major redevelopment of the area around the Old Spanish City. If you get a chance, have a look at the plans for it - it's going to be wonderful when it's done.

In the distance we spotted St Mary's Lighthouse and decided to walk-off our lunch by taking the lower promenade route to go and see it. The Lighthouse has just won a TripAdvisor 'Certificate of Excellence' for the fifth year running so that tells you something. For more information on the Lighthouse click [here](#).

It's about one and a half miles and it was nice and flat and an easily accessible route for all ages and abilities.

One vital thing you need to do before heading to the lighthouse is check the times of the tides. There is a notice posted next to the causeway that tells you when the safe crossing times are. On this occasion, the tide was in our favour so we headed along the causeway to visit the historic white building.

We climbed the 137 steps to the top of the Lighthouse and took in the most spectacular views of the North East coast from the top.

The highlight of our day was seeing the seals bathing on the rocks just in front of the Lighthouse. An amazing sight to see.

There is a Visitor Centre there which tells you all about the Lighthouse's history and there's also a nice shop that sells teas and coffees.

We had a leisurely walk back to Whitley Bay. And before we knew it, it was time to catch the Coaster bus back to Gateshead.

We had a fabulous day out by the sea. Sometimes it's the simple things in life, like the stunning coastal scenery that bring the most pleasure isn't it.

There are lots of other options for things to do in this area and places you can stop off on the Coaster. There's a lovely beach, the [Blue Reef Aquarium](#) at Tynemouth and the [Playhouse Theatre](#) and Tynemouth is a wonderful little place to visit thanks to its lovely cafes and shops and its [Priory and Castle](#). So,

we'll definitely be back.

Lynne x

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