

Shield Row Drift Mine

This is the site of Shield Row Drift Mine. The mine that operated on this site is different from the other colliery sites on the heritage trail because it was a drift mine. Where coal seams ran close to the surface, drift mines could reach the coal by driving a roadway at a slope from the surface, rather than using a mine shaft. The nearest drift mine that you can visit today is at Beamish North of England Open Air Museum.



Although there was no drift mine marked on this spot in the 1850s, two drifts into the Shield Row coal seam (North Drift and South Drift) are shown on the 1890s map. Surface buildings appeared by 1920 and the mine closed in 1951.



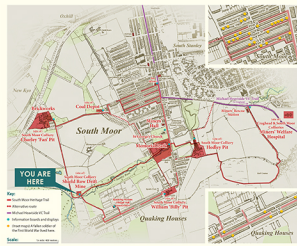
In 1915 colliery viewer Thomas Greener recommended enlarging the storage pond for the water that supplied Shield Row Drift boilers and William Pit reservoir. Photographs taken by Norman Rainbow and his father show the pond in Langley Moor Plantation before and after the dam was built to increase its capacity.



Quaking Houses

Colliery expansion in the early 20th century brought the need for more new houses. The South Moor Colliery Company had an agreement with its workers and Stanley Urban District Council to build 50 houses a year until a village of at least 208 new houses was complete at Quaking Houses. Plans for 268 houses (Third and Fourth Streets) were approved on 13 August 1913 and 52 houses were in hand at the beginning of 1914. The new houses were to have at least three bedrooms, two rooms downstairs and water closets in place of ash pits privies. A further application to pull down the Barracks to make way for 20 more houses was approved on 14 April 1914 and by the end of 1917 fifty old houses had been rebuilt. The Barracks had been built more than half a century earlier to house the first miners at Billy Pit. Bricks for the new houses came by aerial ropeway from Charley brickworks. The council asked for a new sub-Post Office at Quaking Houses in 1915 and the streets were adopted in 1918. A new Co-operative store opened in 1920.

At the time the housing was planned the South Moor Collieries employed over 4,000 men. Half of the heavers were living in rented houses due to the shortage of free colliery houses. Each workman who had to live in a rented house was paid about half the rent by the colliery company. In 1918 the manager proposed paying the full rent to remove the unfairness between men living in free houses and men occupying rented houses. Of course there was also a benefit for the owners, but the South Moor Company had a reputation for looking after its workers better than other colliery companies.



South Moor Heritage Trail

South Moor and Quaking Houses were typical colliery villages that developed before and just after the First World War, around four collieries of William Hedley's South Moor Colliery Company.

South Moor Heritage trail is a five mile circular walk around key eight heritage sites of South Moor and Quaking Houses that existed during or soon after the First World War. Each site is marked by an interpretation board detailing the significance and heritage of the site. Each interpretation board is linked via a QR code to a South Moor heritage website providing further information about the history of the site. Rights of way between the eight sites along the trail are marked by 'way markers' to keep you on the right path.

Over two hundred miners from South Moor and Quaking Houses were killed in the First World War. Their names are engraved at the gates of the First World War Memorial Park. The Heritage Trail marks the former colliery houses in which they lived with a fallen soldier plaque - can you find them in the colliery terraces?

