



The Sill – Fact Sheet

Where does the name come from?

The Whin Sill is a world-famous feature of Northumberland geology. It is the sheer north-facing edge of a great wave of volcanic rock formed from the magma deep below the Earth's crust.

- 'Whin' is the local quarry worker's word for a black, generally hard rock.
- 'Sill' was used to describe any more or less horizontal or flat-lying rock strata.

The Whin Sill is the first sill to be identified by geologists. The word 'sill' then became a universal geological term to describe this sort of feature anywhere in the world.

Facilities in the building:

- Large car park and space for coaches.
- A café, run by local company Fresh Element.
- Toilets on both floors, including accessible toilet with hoist, and a drying room.
- A gift shop.

Facilities for teaching:

- Two learning rooms equipped with sinks, interactive smart boards and other teaching resources. The rooms are split by a partition wall which can be removed to allow flexibility in numbers and activities.
[learning rooms can also be booked as packed lunch spaces]
- A garden space for each learning room that can't be accessed by the public.



- Fully accessible roof planted with Whin Sill grass and other local plants, providing stunning views across the landscape.
- A large exhibition space with displays and interactives on the theme of landscape – **how we depend on it, how it has shaped the way we live, how we have shaped it over time, how it influences our identity, how it inspires us.**
- A small woodland area with a burn running through – accessible via the car park.

Youth Hostel facilities:

- 86 beds
- Family rooms with en suites
- Restaurant and self catering facilities
- Private outdoor learning space

Closest sites to The Sill:

- **Steel Rigg:** a great starting point to walk along one of the most iconic sections of Hadrian's Wall. Views of Crag Lough and access to Sycamore Gap.
- **Walltown Crag:** a former quarry site perfect for exploring woodland and meadows, as well as a wildlife lake and access up onto Hadrian's Wall to the remains of a turret or watchtower.
- **Vindolanda and Roman Army Museum:** A Roman Fort just south of Hadrian's Wall with extensive remains and live excavations, and a museum near Walltown which explores the life of a Roman soldier.
- **Cawfields:** A designated Dark Sky Discovery site, with stratographic views of the Whin Sill.