

## Killingworth

There is no recorded evidence for early human activity at, or in the immediate vicinity of Killingworth, although this is likely to be the result of lack of fieldwork opportunity in the area, rather than the absence of potential. The first documentary reference to Killingworth (HER 800) dates from 1242 when it was held by Roger de Merlay III. There were 9 taxpayers there in 1296, 8 in 1312, and 16 tenements are listed with the names of the owners or occupiers in a detailed survey of the whole township carried out in 1373. In the mid 19th century Killingworth was still a long, 2-row village with two or three farms on the north side of the street, strung out to the west of the junction of the Backworth road with that to Long Benton. A terrace of possible miners' cottages had also been added by that time. Despite recent development it is still today identifiable as an early settlement, with a number of listed, 18th and 19th century, stone-built structures. Killingworth Common Fields (HER 801), enclosed in 1793, show evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation features. Killingworth Moor (HER 1386), at that time unenclosed, was used to hold race meetings in conjunction with the Town Moor until 1794, after which the meetings were moved to Gosforth (in 1882). During the industrial age beginning in the late 18th century Killingworth became an important coalmining centre. A number of pits sprang up in the area (HER 1082, 1097 and 1103) opened along with brick and tile works (HER 1117, 1102 and 1092), quarries (HER 2160-1) and a saw mill (HER 1101). The collieries were served by wagonways (HER 1083, 1091, 1098 and 2162), one of the earliest of which served Killingworth colliery and possible Bewick Pit, with its southern terminus at 'Killingworth Staithes', Wallsend (HER 2100) where there were at least four coal drops. The later history of Killingworth is mainly as a residential district, although other sites of cultural heritage importance are recorded there, including a World War Two period supply depot (HER 1828).