

# Crowtrees Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

## What is special?

Crowtrees has been greatly influenced by its geology with coal mining and quarrying shaping the landscape. The remains of the engine house built in the late 1860s reflects on bygone days, using stonework from an earlier 'showcase' colliery. If you search through the undergrowth you can find remnants of the earlier phase with its tramway incline and houses for the workers.

This large nature reserve is special because of the diversity of habitats found here; flower rich grassland, scrub, ponds and wetland make it a real hot-spot for wildlife.

On the edge of the Magnesian Limestone plateaux, the grassland found here has a rich and unique mix of wildflowers and grasses. This is Magnesian Limestone grassland and part of the site has been designated as a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). Enjoy the flowers and look for the blue moor grass and small scabious, one of the few places in the country where you can see them growing together. This combination is so rare that only an area equal to the size of 80 football pitches remain in the whole country.

The ponds are home to frogs, toads and smooth newts. Reed bunting, sedge warbler and grasshopper warbler use the wetland for breeding, while mallard and moorhen can be found here all year round. The enchanting call of the cuckoo can be heard in the summer as it searches for an unguarded nest to lay its eggs.

[more info...](#)

**Contact the Countryside Service**  
telephone: 0191 372 9100  
email: [countryside@durham.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@durham.gov.uk)  
[www.durham.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.durham.gov.uk/countryside)

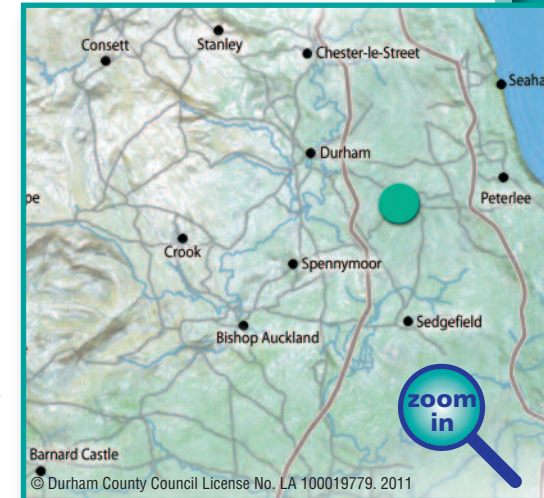


**Area:** 106 acres (43 hectares)

**Grid Reference:** NZ 334 374

**Map:** Ordnance Survey Explorer 305

**Directions:** 7.5 miles southeast of Durham City centre. Located on B6291 between Coxhoe Household Waste Site and Quarrington Hill. Turn left into industrial estate, opposite Quarrington Hill Community Centre. At the top of road, bear left, follow the track around. Nearest postcode DH6 4QH



**Parking:** No car park. Park in Quarrington Hill village

**Public transport:** Service 55 (Arriva). Bus stops opposite Malcolm Avenue and the industrial estate, Quarrington Hill.

**Dogs:** Allowed under control and on a lead during bird nesting season (March to August). Please clean up after your dog

**Designation:** Local Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Wildlife Site, UK Woodland Assurance Scheme certified

**Suitable for:** Walkers. Horses and cyclists are allowed on the permissive cycle path

**Habitats:** Grassland, scrub, wetland

*Whilst every effort has been made by Durham County Council to ensure accuracy of information, the Council cannot accept any liability resulting from omissions or inaccuracies.*

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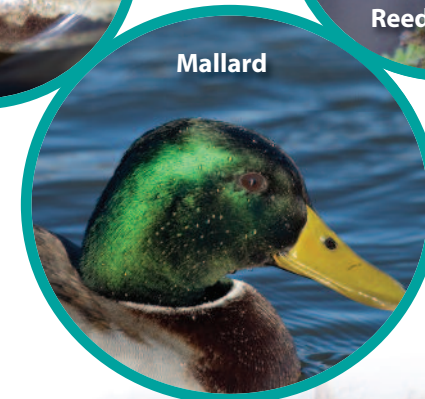
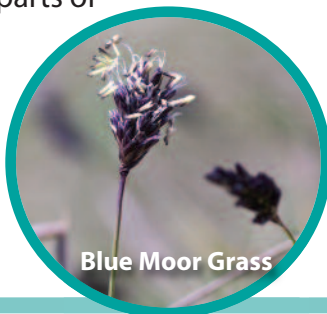
In the winter magnificent highland cattle graze the wetland area and fields around it. These keep the tall grasses and scrub down. If this vegetation was not controlled, the dominant grasses would take over and crowd out the slower growing wildflowers. The cattle also churn up the soil creating an area where wildflowers and grasses can set seed and colonise.

Crowtrees is close to Kingswood, Little Wood and Coxhoe Quarry Wood Local Nature Reserves forming a huge wildlife corridor.

A permissive cycle route runs through the reserve, providing a scenic traffic free route between Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill. It is clearly marked on the map and we ask that cyclists and horse-riders remain on this route.

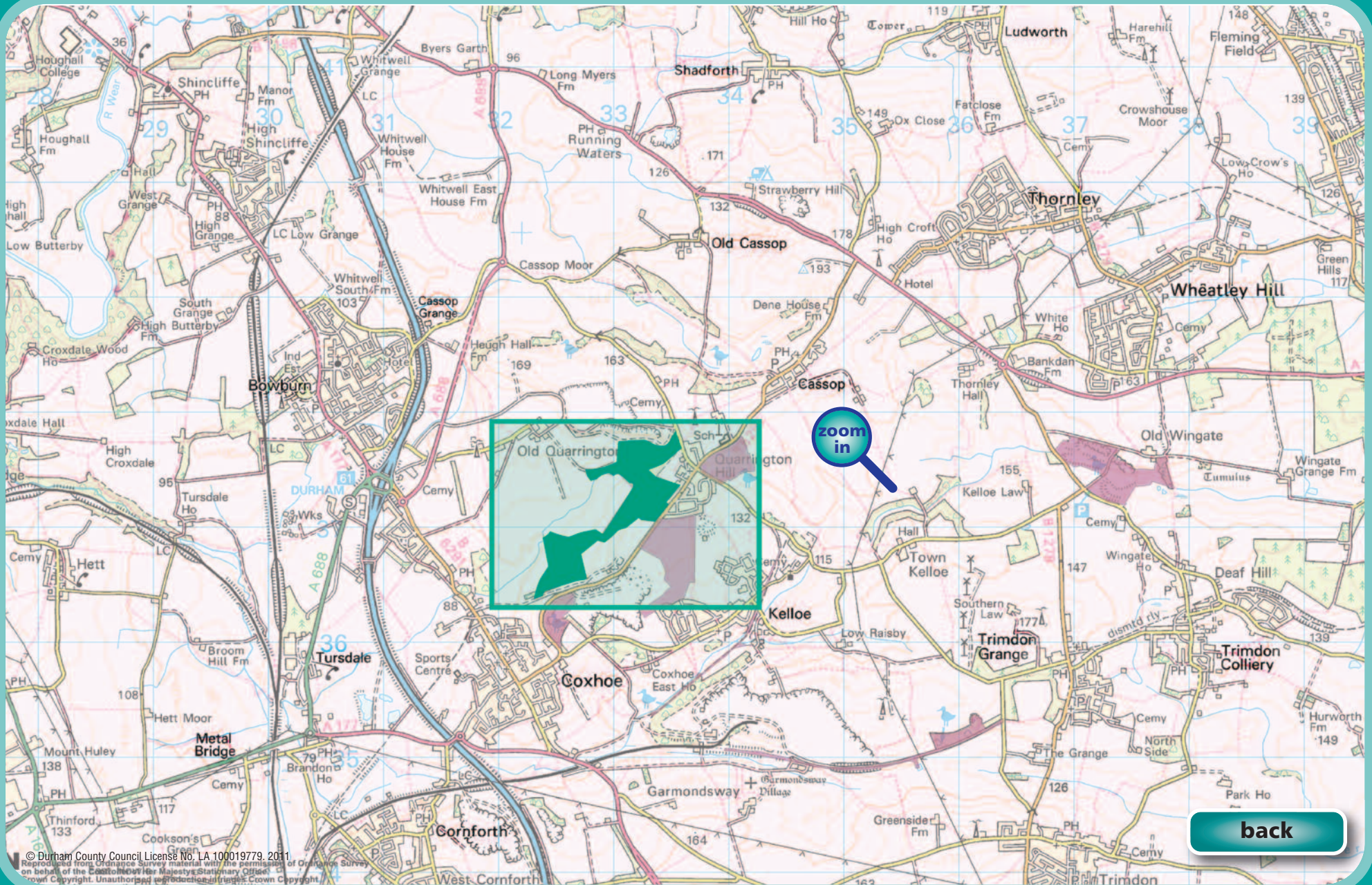
## Accessibility Statement

The cycle path is an average of 2.5 metres wide and consists of a hard unsealed surface. Other paths are a mixture of bare earth and a hard unsealed surface with some large stones. All of the paths, especially those leading to the quarry plantation and ponds, have steep slopes on them. There are a number of kissing gates giving access to the quarry and ponds. A number of stiles allow access into wilder parts of the site.

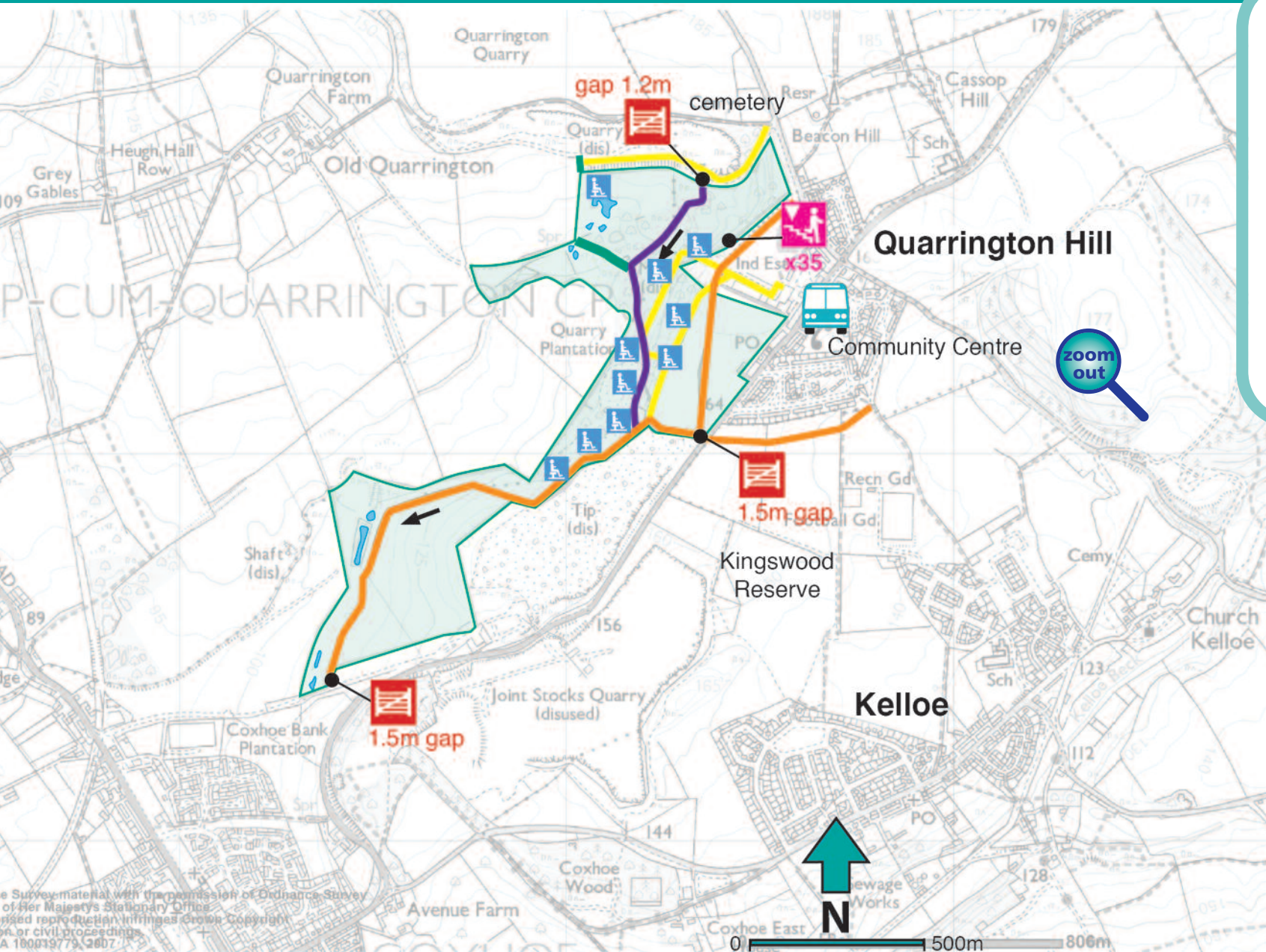


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**KEY**

-  Seat
-  Steps Down
-  Gate
-  Bus Stop
-  Permissive Cycle Route
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Direction of Travel
-  Grass

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