

Greencroft Heath Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

What is special?

The best time to visit Greencroft Heath is early autumn when the flowering heather produces a great sweeping carpet of pink and purple. There are two main types of heather found here: ling and bell heather. The flowers of bell heather grow in clusters at the tip of the plant and if you pick one of the clusters when the flowers have dried out and shake it, you can hear the seeds rattling like a bell.

Greencroft Heath, along with nearby Chapman's Well LNR, is one of the few remaining areas of lowland heath in County Durham. Eighty percent of our lowland heath has vanished in the last 200 years and this site contains about one fifth of all that remains in County Durham. A good lowland heath is a mix of large areas of heather as well as grassland, mire, woodland and ponds.

Parts of this site are permanently waterlogged, areas known as mires, and contain specialised plants that can survive the wet conditions including the fluffy looking cotton grass, marsh violet and a variety of sedges and moss.



[more info...](#)

Contact the Countryside Service
telephone: 0191 372 9100
email: countryside@durham.gov.uk
www.durham.gov.uk/countryside



Area: 39 acres (15.5 hectares)

Grid Reference: NZ 169512

Map: Ordnance Survey Explorer 307

Directions: From A693 Morrison Busty roundabout, take B6168 towards Annfield Plain. Turn left onto Durham Rd, then first left, turn right, then left again onto Mordue Terrace. At the bottom of the street turn right onto Park Close, follow the road to the end. Access Greencroft Heath through the gap in the wall near the car park entrance, step over the horse stile to the left and walk for approx 200 metres.

Nearest postcode for GPS purposes DH9 8PB

Parking:

Adjacent to tennis courts, behind Park Close. 3 disabled bays

Public Transport:

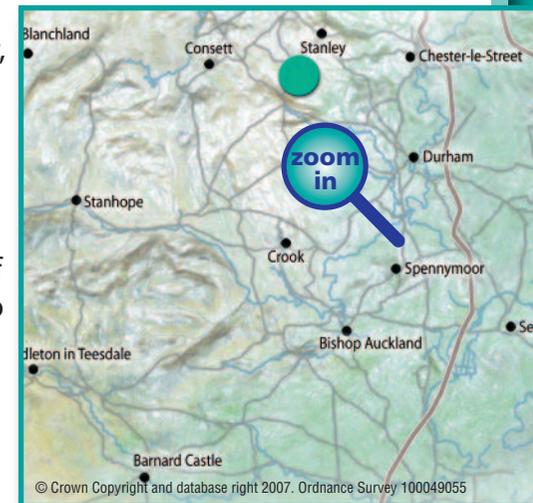
Service numbers 78, 78a, x30, x31 (Go North East) Bus stops at Durham Road, Annfield Plain, Greencroft Industrial Estate and Pontop Terrace, Greencroft.

Dogs: Allowed under control. Please clean up after your dog

Designation: Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserve, Local Site

Suitable for: Walkers, but cyclists and horse riders can use the dismantled railway which runs through the centre of reserve

Habitats: Lowland heath, ponds, grassland, scrub



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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On a hot summers day check out large stones or areas of bare earth for common lizards. You might just catch a fleeting glimpse before it spots you and rushes off to hide in the undergrowth.

There are a few ponds here, the largest is next to the football ground. Another is a crater formed by a second World War bomb which luckily missed its intended target. Keep your eyes peeled around these ponds for frogs, newts, dragonflies and damselflies. Black darter dragonfly has been sighted hunting near the ponds – this small, entirely black dragonfly, flies between July and September.

A dismantled railway track, managed by Sustrans, runs through the centre of the site. It used to form part of the Consett to Sunderland cycle track (part of the C2C route), although the official route has been diverted through Greencroft Industrial Estate.

Accessibility statement

Most of the paths running through the site are made of bare earth, are generally flat and can be difficult to negotiate in wet weather. These paths vary in width between 0.6 and 1.2 metres. There are no steps and no seats. The mix of heather and marshland makes the rest of the site difficult to walk on.

Please stick to the paths to avoid disturbing wildlife.



Common Lizard



Heather



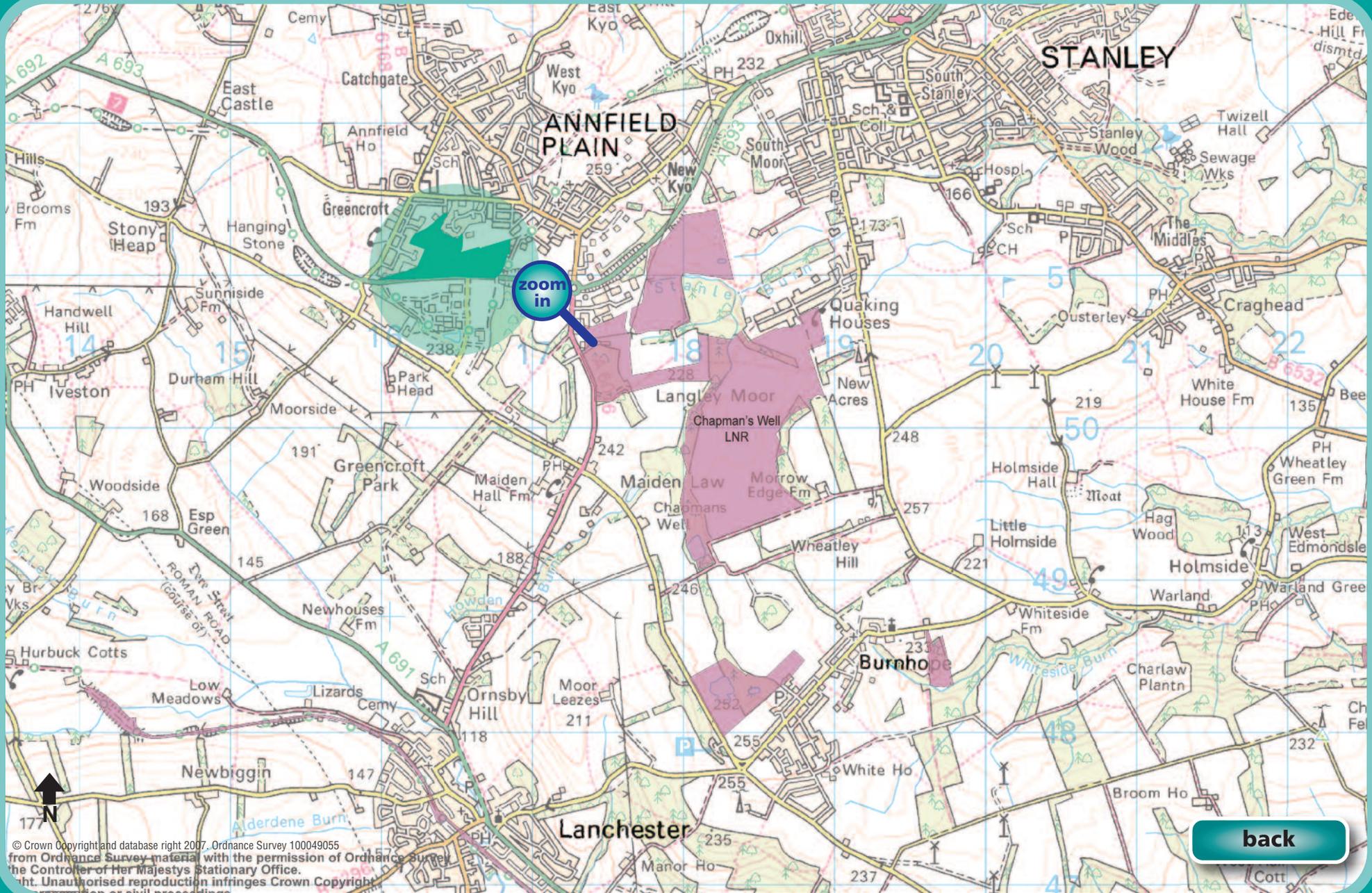
Frog



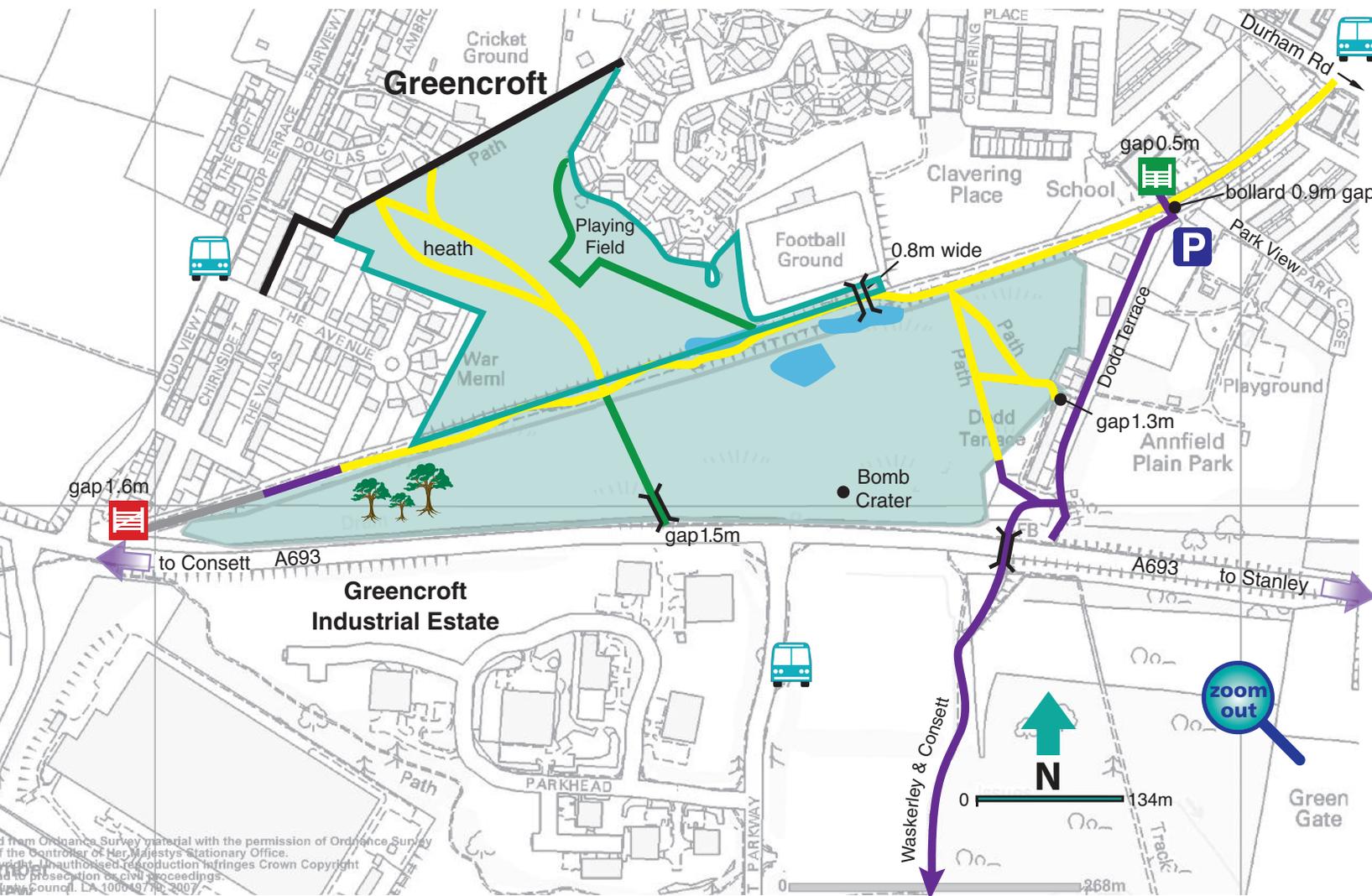
Black Darter

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KEY

-  Gate
-  Stile
-  Parking
-  Bus Stop
-  Bare Earth
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Tarmac
-  Grass Track
-  Bridge

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