

# Low Newton Junction Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

## What is special?

A visit to Low Newton Junction Local Nature Reserve is an interesting one. There are so many different habitats in such a small area. The site provides an excellent wildlife corridor on the edge of the East Coast main line and Newton Hall housing estate.

Past uses as a sand quarry and a railway junction has had a direct bearing on the wide variety of habitats now present. Species rich grassland carpets the old sand quarry, containing wildflowers such as northern marsh orchid, harebell, ox-eye daisy and birdsfoot trefoil. Birdsfoot trefoil is the larval food plant of the dingy skipper butterfly and a population of this nationally and regionally rare butterfly can be found here. Ponds have developed along the old railway lines to the north and the cuttings act as a drain for the surrounding land. Toads, frogs, newts, dragonflies and damselflies can be seen during the warmer months. Because of their low numbers, great crested newts are protected by law. It is an offence to handle or photograph them without a licence. If you accidentally catch a newt, please return it to the water. Marshes have developed in low-lying areas around the ponds.

There is a lot of tree cover. Birch, oak, willow and hawthorn provide a home for birds such as the reed bunting, a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species. There is also a small area of heather on the slopes of the railway cutting.

[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:** 30 acres (12 hectares)

**Grid Reference:** NZ 284 449

**Map:** Ordnance Survey Explorer 308

**Directions:** 2.5m north of Durham City centre. On foot: Path leaves Newton Hall Est. from Canterbury Rd, north of Eggleston Close. Follow path over the railway bridge, entrance is on left just over the bridge.

By car: From A167 Pity Me roundabout follow Finchale Priory/Brasside signs. In Brasside, take right turn signposted 'prison staff and visitor car park' and Public Bridleway. Drive through the car park and follow the very rough track parallel to the prison. Continue along the side of the prison until it opens out and bear right to the parking area. Site entrance is through the metal gate, near the phone mast. Nearest postcode DH15XP

**Parking:** See above. No disabled parking

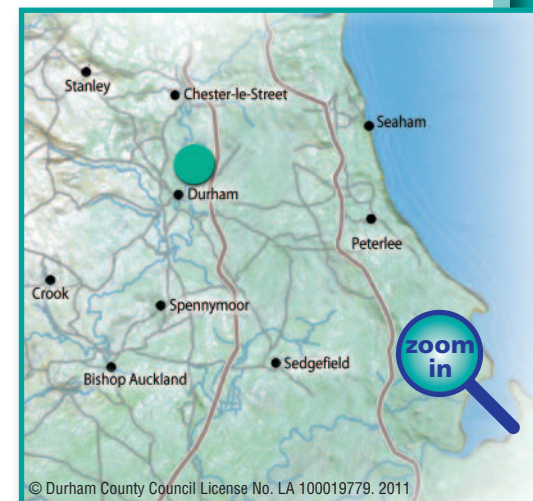
**Public transport:** Services 63,62, 64 (Arriva) D4 (Go North East). Bus stops at Canterbury Road and HM Prison Frankland

**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, UK Woodland Assurance Scheme certified

**Suitable for:** Walkers only. Cyclists and horseriders can only use the dismantled railway

**Habitats:** Ponds, meadows, grassland, lowland heath, woodland



*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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## Accessibility statement

There is a disused railway track which runs through the site. This 1.8m wide path is flat and is made of a hard unsealed surface with some large stones. The rest of the paths are made of bare earth, are undulating and can be difficult to negotiate in wet weather. These paths vary in width between 0.6 metre and 1.2 metres. There are several sets of steps and some steep gradients. There are three seats.



Dingy Skipper



Reed Bunting



Harebell



Great Crested Newt



Dragonfly



Frogspawn

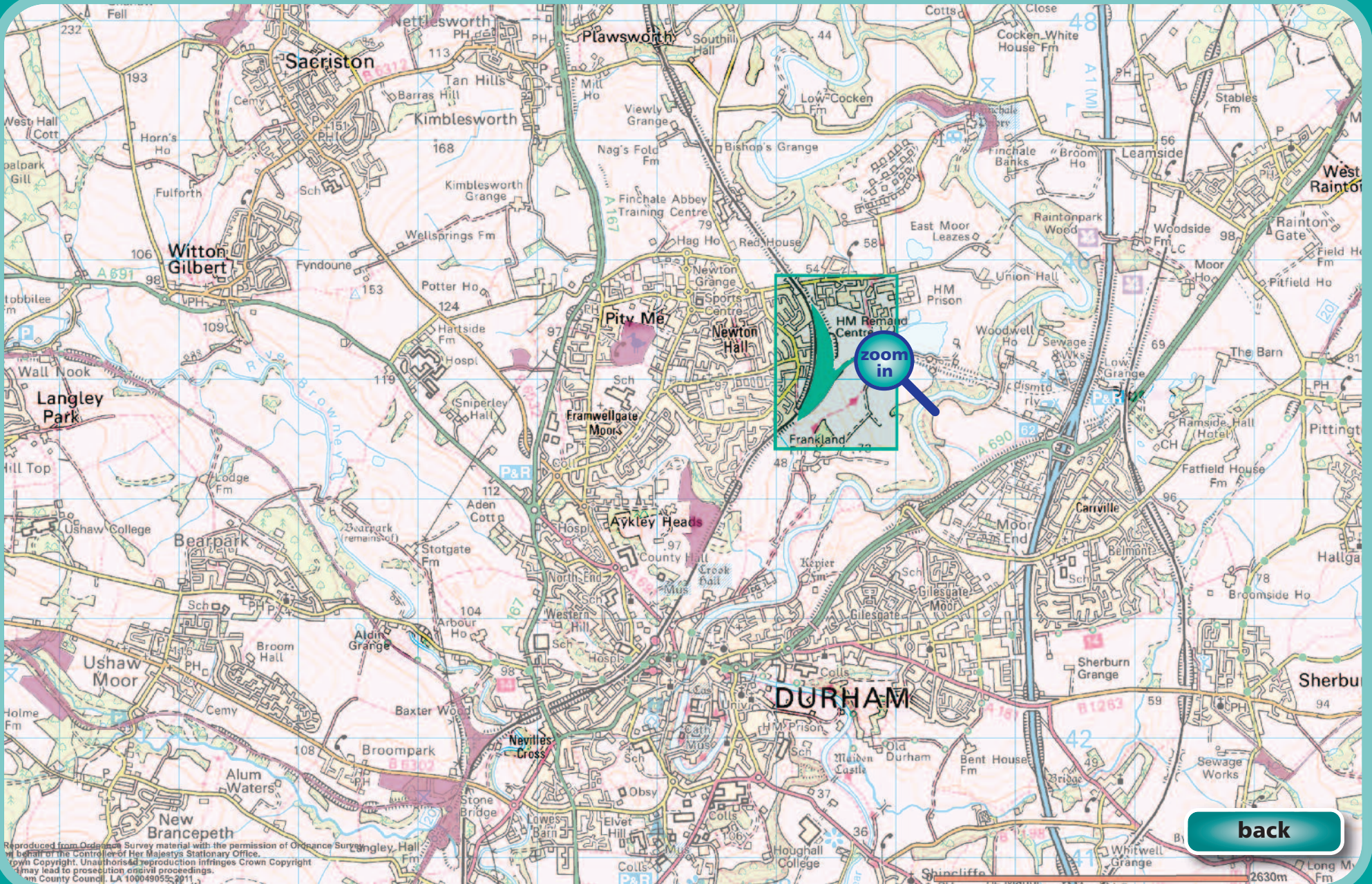


Birdsfoot Trefoil

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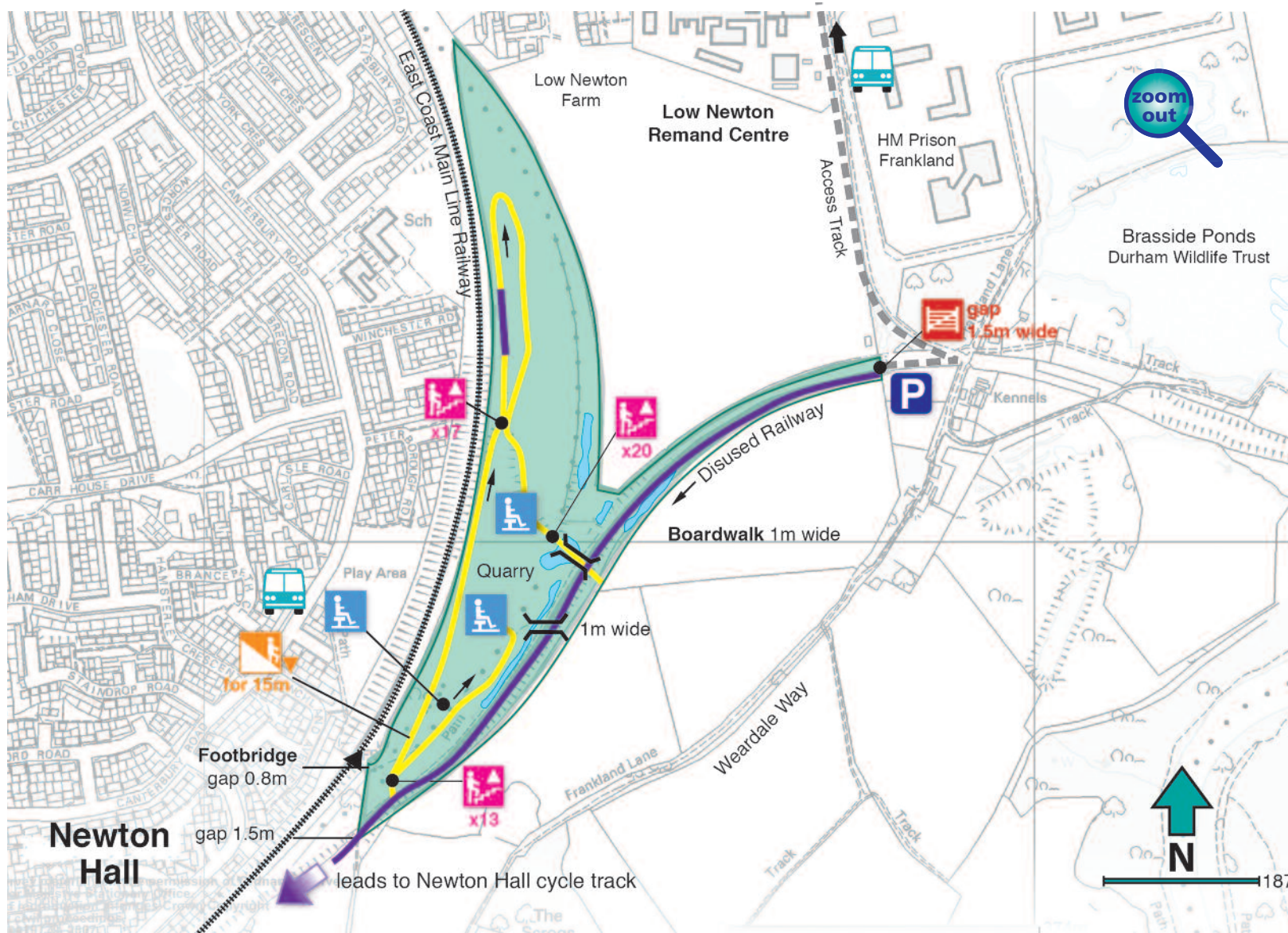
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## KEY

-  Seat
-  Steps Up
-  Gate
-  Steep Slope Down 1:10-1:10
-  Parking
-  Bus Stop
-  Bare Earth
-  Railway
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Direction of Travel
-  Bridge



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