

# Littlewood Local Nature Reserve

## What is special?

Littlewood Local Nature Reserve is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It contains a small pocket of Magnesian Limestone grassland, one of the UK's rarest habitats and is home to a rich and distinctive group of plants and insects.

In summer, the meadows bloom with flowers typical of these grasslands; small scabious, common rock-rose, birdsfoot trefoil and many orchids. The dark red helleborine orchid has been recorded here and this reserve contains one of four remaining basil thyme colonies in County Durham. Both of these plants are nationally rare.

Littlewood is a glorious haven for over 18 species of butterflies, the colony of northern brown argus butterfly is nationally rare.

Numbers of grey partridge are continuing to increase here, despite the population declining nationally by 60%. One reason for this is the wide range of insects which provide plenty of food. We have also erected fencing which provides an area for partridge and other birds to breed and roost undisturbed.

This site is home to brown hares, field voles and weasels, and numerous birds including skylark, linnet, little owl and green woodpecker.

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

[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:** 17 acres (7 hectares)

**Grid Reference:** NZ 341 377

**Map:** Ordnance Survey Explorer 305

### Directions:

8 miles southeast of Durham City centre. Main entrance is on the B6291 between the villages of Cassop and Quarrington Hill, opposite Cassop primary school. Look for the wind turbine. Nearest postcode for GPS purposes DH6 4RA

### Parking:

Limited parking at the main entrance.  
No disabled parking bays

### Public Transport:

Number 55 (Arriva). Bus stop next to school

### Dogs:

Allowed under control. During bird nesting season (March to August) dogs must be kept on a lead. Please clean up after your dog

### Designation:

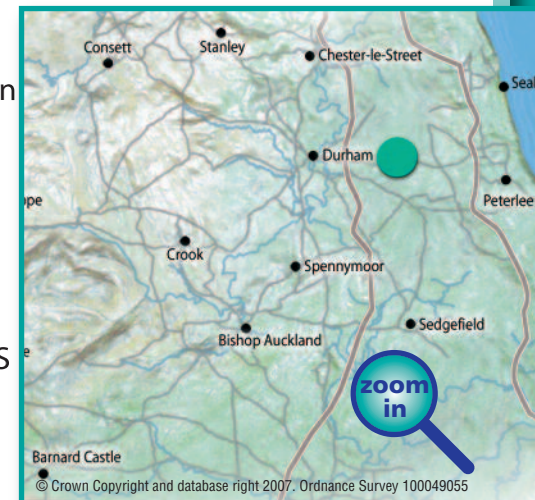
Local Nature Reserve, Local Wildlife Site, UK Woodland Assurance Scheme certified

### Suitable for:

Walkers

### Habitats:

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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## Accessibility statement

The site can only be accessed over a stile.

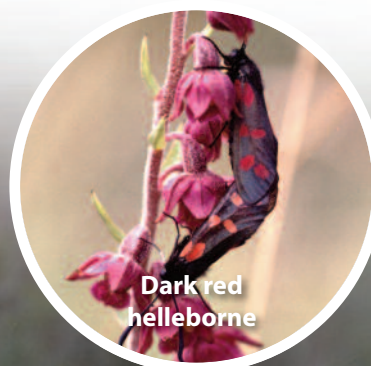
Two main paths are mown into the grass during spring and summer. Both paths slope downwards from the north entrance point. Please stay on these paths to minimise disturbance to ground-nesting birds.



Little owl



Grey partridge



Dark red hellebore



Linnets



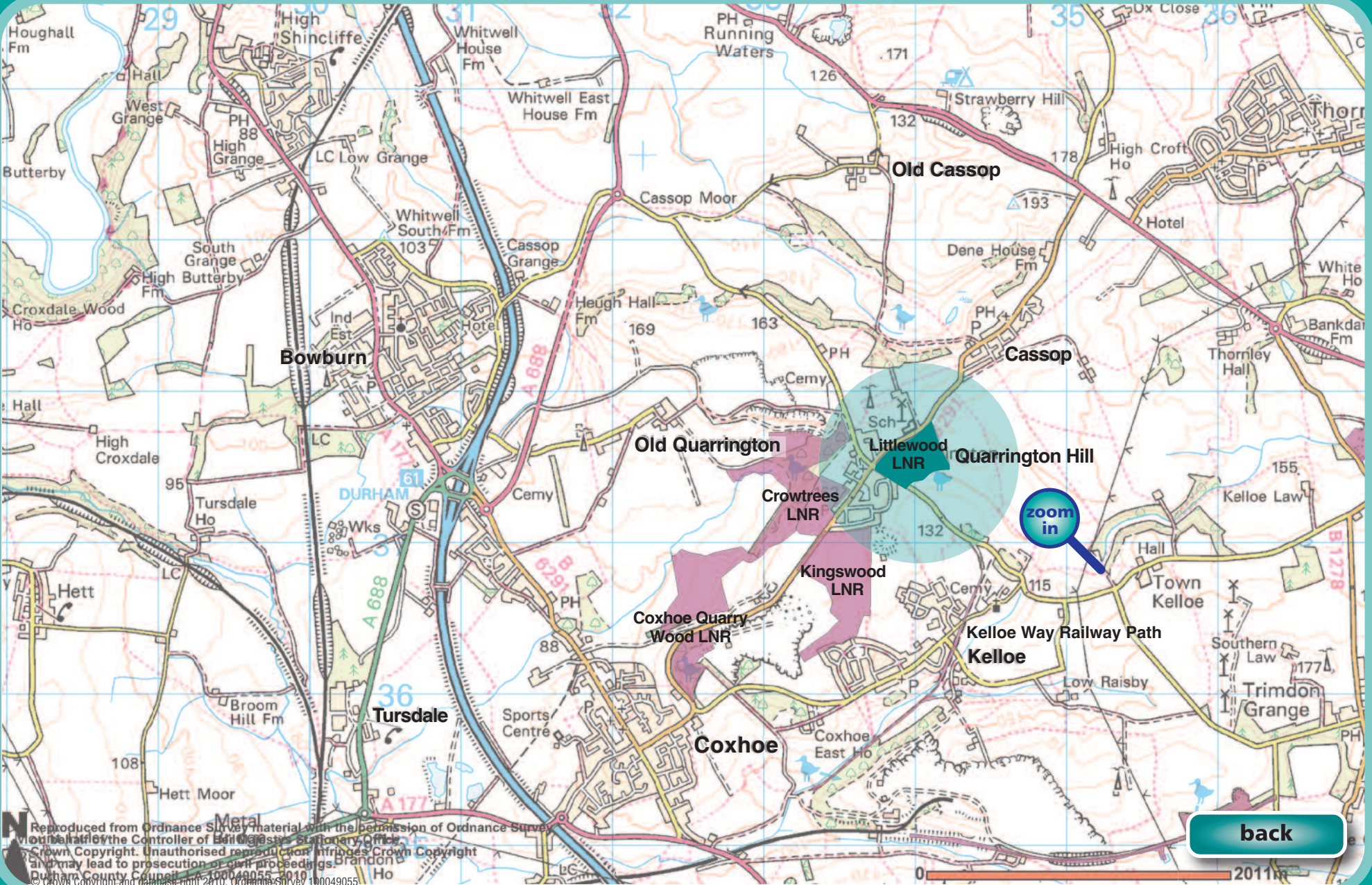
Basil thyme



Northern brown argus

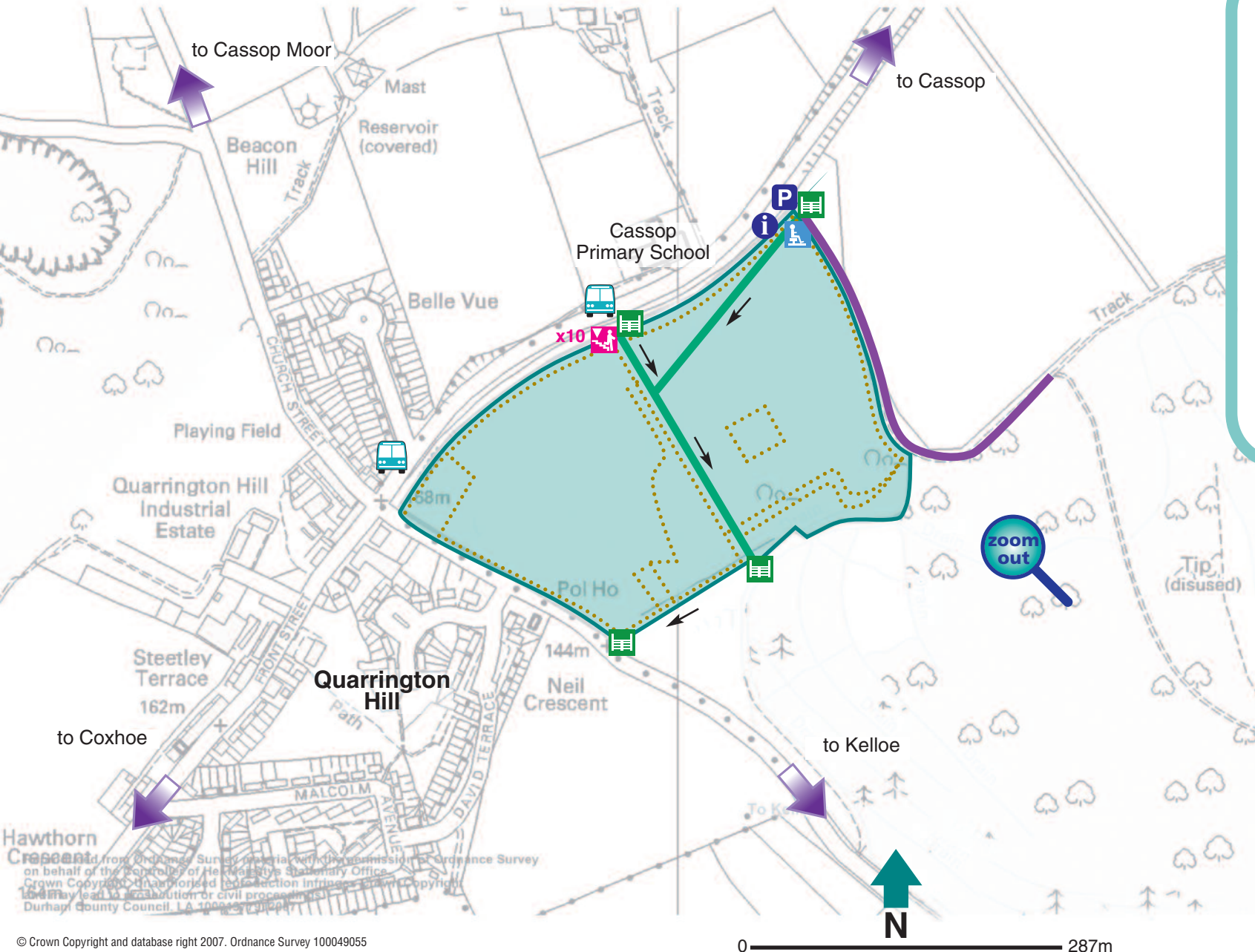
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## KEY

-  Interpretation Panel
-  Parking
-  Seat
-  Stile
-  Steps Down
-  Bus Stop
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Grass Path
-  Direction of Travel
-  Fencing

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