

11. The Kittiwake Tower

- An artificial nesting platform on the banks of the Tyne.
- Home to some of the most inland breeding Kittiwakes in the world. Saltmeadows Riverside. 0191 433 3441

12. Lamesley Pastures

- Project to recreate 'silver meadows' or traditional winter flood meadows.
- New bird hide.
- Short walk in pretty rural setting. Access from the car park of the Ravensworth Arms Hotel, Lamesley. 0191 433 3443

13. Longacre Wood

- Three ages of woodland from young plantation to mature woodland.
- Gateshead's best Bluebell wood. Between the A1 and Lamesley, access from Smithy Lane. 0191 460 4696

14. Norwood Nature Park

- Originally created as part of Gateshead's 1990 National Garden Festival site
 - A paradise of woodland, wetland and wildflower meadow on the edge of the Team Valley Trading Estate.
- Please note: Access for educational establishments and community groups is by arrangement only.
- Access is off Swallowtail Drive, Festival Park, off Lobley Hill Road. 0191 433 3441

15. Ousbrough Wood

- Magical ancient woodland with a surprising industrial past. Access from High Forge near Beamish. 0191 433 3443

16. Ryton Willows Local Nature Reserve

- Riverside grassland, woodlands and ponds
- Keelman's Way riverside cycle route. Marked trail. Between old Ryton Village and the River Tyne. 0191 433 6266

17. Shibdon Pond Local Nature Reserve

- Award winning wildlife site
- A Durham Wildlife Trust Reserve
- Large pond, marsh, grassland and scrub
- Bird hide
- Marked trail. Beside Blaydon Pool on the B6371. 0191 433 6266

18. Stargate ponds

- Wildlife rich ponds. Access is off the A695 at Stargate. 0191 433 6266

19. Summerhill and Stella Meadows

- Old wildflower meadows with great views of the Tyne and a fascinating ancient history.
- Circular walk available. Access from lay-by on the B6317 Stella Road, west of Caroline Terrace. 0191 433 3443

20. Windy Nook Nature Park

- A large area of public open space in the east of Gateshead.
- Spectacular panoramic views of Tyneside
- A large network of surfaced paths provides access for people with disabilities
- The wildlife interest on site includes a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) on the western edge of the site. This LNR has a small spring-fed pond, areas of scrub and a young woodland. Access off Stone Street, Windy Nook. 0191 433 3441

21. Wardley Manor Country Park

- Reclamation site with grassland and ponds.
- Large area of open green space in the east of Gateshead.
- Includes Pelaw Quarry Pond Local Nature Reserve
- Circular walks and opportunities for cycling and horse riding. Access from Mill Lane, Hebburn or from the Bowes Railway Path. 0191 460 4696



22. Watergate Forest Park

- Site of the former Watergate Colliery
- A country park with lake, woodland and wildflower meadows.
- A Great North Forest Gateway site in recognition of its ease of access to the wider countryside.
- Marked routes including easy access route for people with disabilities.
- Home of the National Willow Collection.
- Wide range of sculptures. Off Whickham Highway at Lobley Hill. 0191 460 4696

Bird Hides

There are bird hides at Thornley Wood and Far Pasture Ponds in the Derwent Walk Country Park, at Shibdon Pond and at Lamesley Pastures. Access is by key only - available from the Thornley Woodlands Centre and the Development and Enterprise Reception at the Civic Centre.

Events

A full programme of over 100 events, from Red Kite Safaris to Minibeast Hunts, run throughout the year. Events are listed in the Gateshead 'Outdoor Events' leaflet, in 'Council News', at www.gateshead.gov.uk or by ringing the contacts on the back page.

School Visits

A specialist environmental education service is provided at Thornley Woodlands Centre and at the larger countryside sites. 01207 545212

Schools interested in a long term involvement in Watergate Forest Park can join the 'Watergate Watchers' scheme.

For other sites ring the number for that site.

Volunteers

If you are over 18 and would like to help look after Gateshead's countryside and learn more about wildlife then why not join Gateshead Countryside Volunteers.

Jayne Calvert - 0191 433 3524

Wildlife Watch

Wildlife Watch is a nature club for children 7 - 12 years old. Gateshead's Watch club meet once every two months at Norwood Nature Park. Peter Shield - 0191 433 3441

Northern Kites

Northern Kites is a project to re-introduce Red Kites into their former breeding range in the northeast of England after an absence of 150 years. It is a joint initiative between Natural England, RSPB, Gateshead Council, Northumbria Water, The National Trust and the Forestry Commission.

Northern Kites Office-0191 496 1555



Contacts

Countryside Management Team

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Countryside Projects Team

Development and Enterprise
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead Council NE8 1HH
0191 433 3443

Public Transport Information


Traveline Northeast - 0870 608 2608

Discover Gateshead's Countryside

Welcome

Did you know that over half of Gateshead is made up of countryside? The Council cares for over 20 nature reserves and country parks for the benefit of people and wildlife. These wonderful places include ancient woodlands, wildflower meadows, ponds and riverbanks and most are just a bus ride away.

There is lots to see and do in Gateshead's countryside, you can take a walk, watch wildlife and escape from the stresses of modern life. Why not come along to one of our 100 events that take place though out the year? Our Countryside Rangers are always willing to answer questions and give advice about wildlife and the countryside.

We also produce a number of publications and most of these are free. Sites which have free leaflets are shown by 

Countryside Visitor Centres

1. Thornley Woodlands Centre

The Visitor Centre is in the heart of the woodlands of the Derwent Walk Country Park and is easily reached from the A694 at Rowlands Gill. The Centre is open 12 noon to 5pm weekends and spring and summer Bank Holidays. During the week it is open 12 noon to 2pm. Facilities include car parking, toilets, information and displays. There is also a bus stop outside the Centre. 01207 545212 

2. Swalwell Visitor Centre

At the Swalwell end of the Derwent Walk, Swalwell Visitor Centre is on the B6317 beside Blaydon Rugby Club. The Centre is open 10am to 5pm daily, even if members of staff are not present. Facilities include car parking, toilets, information and displays. There is a bus stop beside the access road to the Centre. 0191 414 2106 

Sites

3. Addison and Hedgfield Woods

- Quiet meadows and woodland with a significant local past.
- This woodland was once a thriving colliery and village where the inventor of the telephone made an experimental call.
- Circular walks available. Opposite the old St Hilda's Church on the B6317 at Hedgfield near Ryton. 0191 433 3443 

4. Banesley Lane Woodland

- A small maturing woodland with a circular walk and fine views. Access from Banesley Lane, between Lady Park and Old Ravensworth near the Southern end of the Team Valley Trading Estate. 0191 433 3443 


Gateshead Countryside Visitor Centres and Sites




5. Bensham Butterfly Station

- A pocket-sized paradise packed with summer wildflowers and mini-beasts.
- Please note: Access for educational establishments and community groups is by arrangement only. Off Elysium Lane, Bensham. 0191 433 3441 

6. Blaydon Burn

- Project to conserve the wildlife & archaeology of Blaydon Burn.
- One of the most important sites for industrial archaeology in the region.
- Mature woodland, meadows & wetlands. Several access points including adjacent to the Black Bull pub, off the B6317, Blaydon. 0191 433 3525 


7. Burdon Moor

- Long-term project to recreate a lowland heath
- The site offers a taste of that wild upland experience, near to one of Gateshead's highest points.
- Artistic waymarked trail from Watergate Forest Park and Kibblesworth.
- A good place to see a range of birds in summer. Access is from the Bowes Railway Path on the opposite side of the road from the Tanfield Railway. 0191 433 3443 

8. Cross Lane Meadows

- Traditionally managed wildflower meadows and developing woodland.
- Spectacular display of Cowslips in spring. Opposite the MetroCentre between Swalwell and Dunston. Access from Market Lane, Swalwell. 0191 433 3441 

9. Derwent Walk Country Park and Derwenthaugh Park

- Our premier site.
- A mixture of natural woodlands, meadows, riverside and reclaimed industrial land.
- The Derwent Walk has marked trails for all users - walkers, cyclists and hores riders.
- Two visitor centres
- Two bird hides
- Easy access to all parts of Derwenthaugh Park and the Derwent Walk. Between Swalwell and Rowlands Gill. 01207 545212 

10. Dunston Pond Local Nature

- A small wetland near the MetroCentre which is the home to a pair of breeding Mute Swans. Access is off Wellington Road, Dunston near the railway bridge. 0191 433 3441 