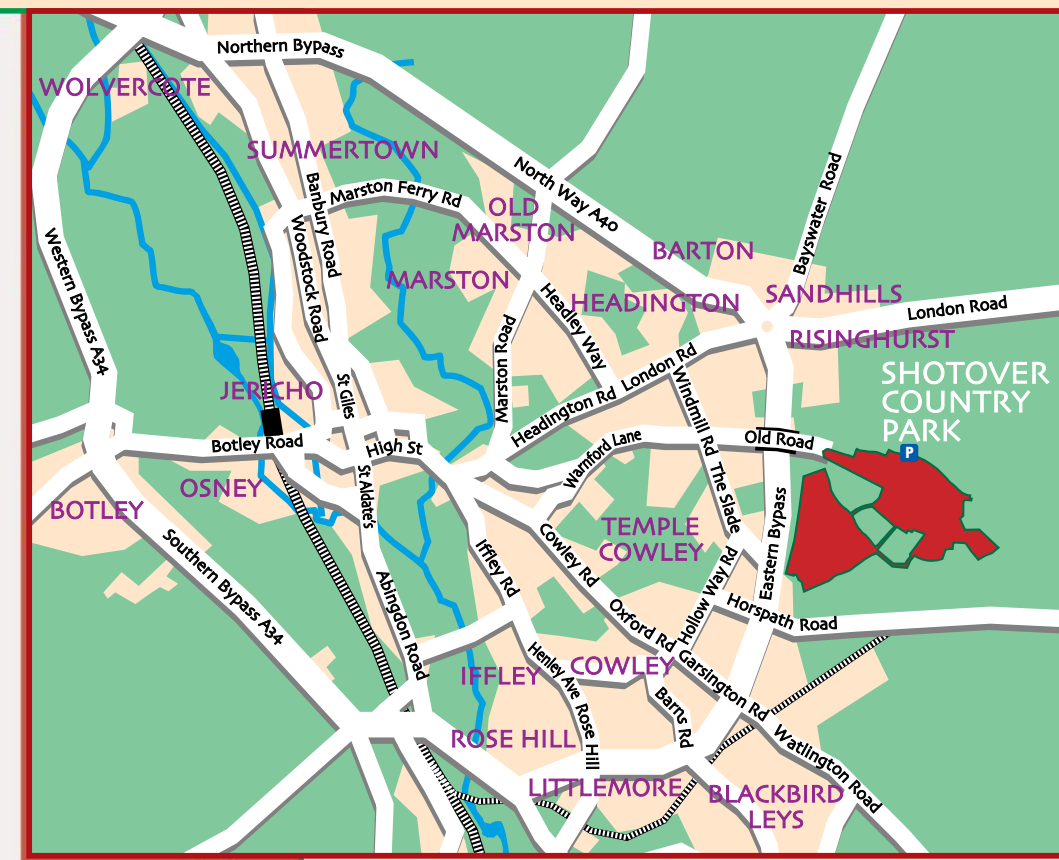
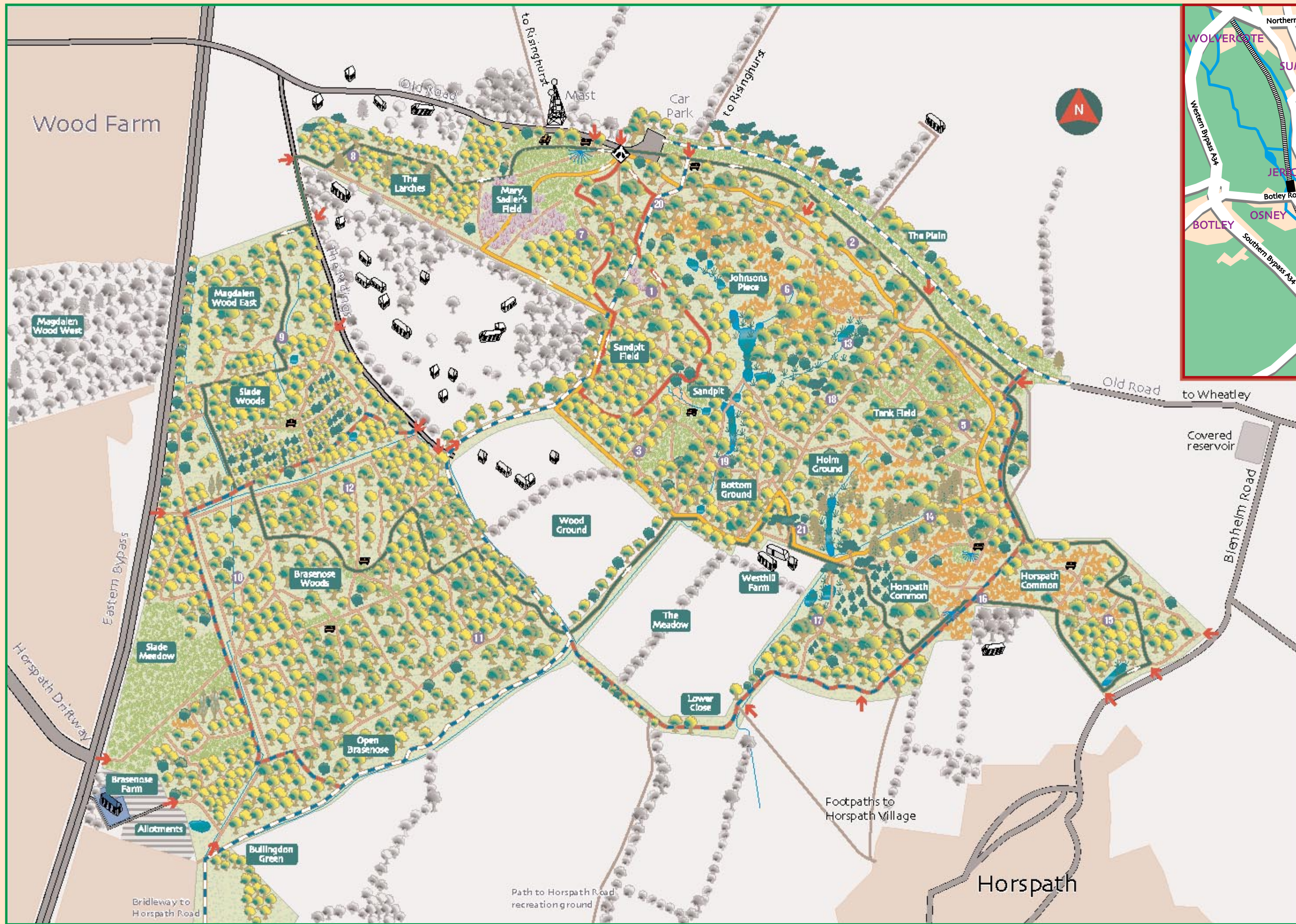


Exploring Shotover Country Park



How to get to Shotover

It is easy to get to Shotover, which is located just to the east of Oxford.

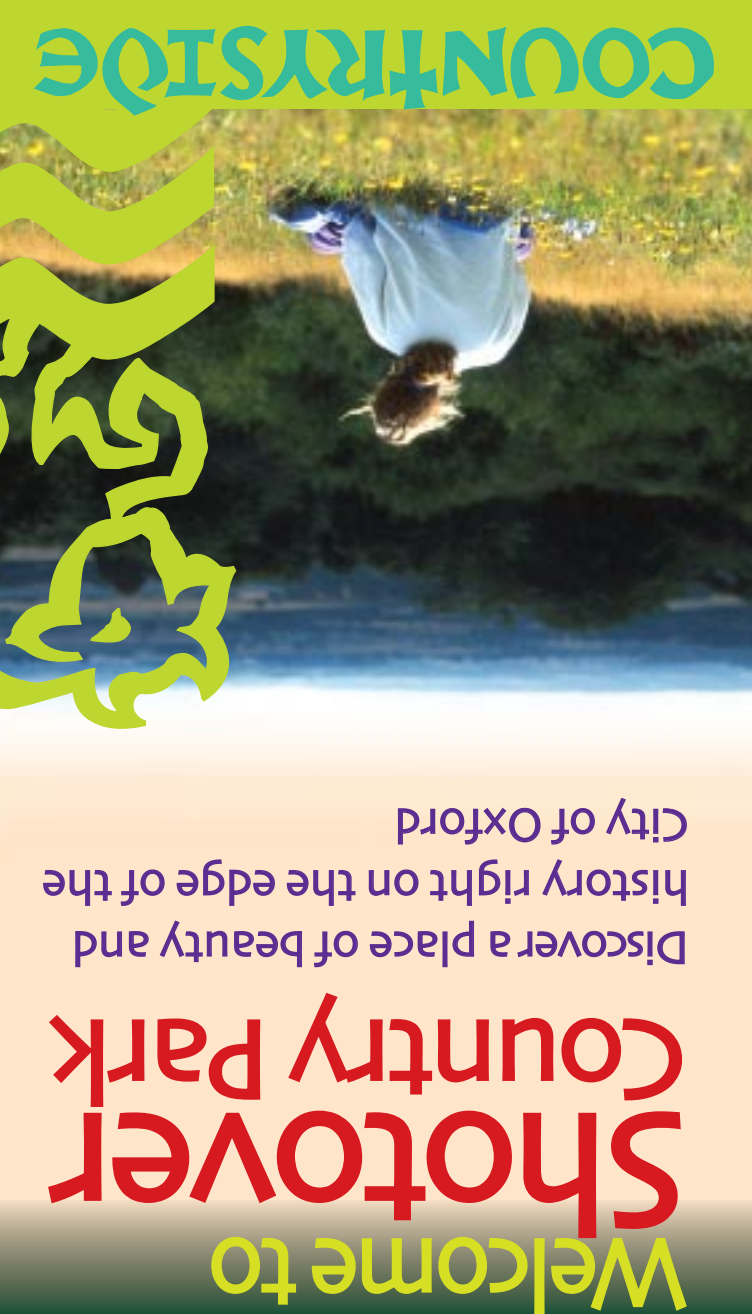
By car, follow the Old Road east from Headington over the bypass and up a steep hill to the top where the road ends in the main car park.

By bus, the No.10 Stagecoach service runs nearest to Shotover. Get off at the Corner House pub at the end of Slade Road. Walk down Horspath Driftway and cross the Eastern Bypass at the pelican crossing to enter the Country Park on the other side. For timetable and route information contact Stagecoach Oxford, T: 01865 772250 www.stagecoachbus.com/oxfordshire

Key to Main Map

- Starting point for Nature trails and Orienteering Course
- Sandpit Walk 30 mins
- Northwood Trail 45 mins
- Boundary Patrol 90 mins
- Bridleway and Cycle track
- Permitted bridleway and Cycle track
- Maintained paths not all paths are marked
- Ancient Woodland Oaks
- Deciduous Woods
- Evergreen Trees Spruce, Pine
- Poplar
- Larch
- Bushes
- Heather
- Grass
- Bracken
- Wetland
- Ponds
- Streams and Ditches
- Seats
- Picnic Bench
- View Point
- Entry Points to Shotover
- Orienteering Stations
- Metalled Roads
- Built-up Areas
- Buildings





Looking after Oxford's Countryside

A small team of rangers based at Brasenose Farm manages 1000 acres of natural open space in and around Oxford including Shotover Country Park. We aim to provide a safe, accessible and attractive setting for enjoyment of the countryside and an environment rich in wildlife.

You can help us to look after Shotover by:

- Taking your litter home
- Not lighting fires
- By only riding your horse or bicycle on the bridleway
- Not using motorbikes anywhere in the park
- Respecting other park users by not playing amplified music
- Not using a metal detector
- Leaving wildflowers and fungi for others to enjoy
- By becoming a volunteer. Contact us for details.

If you have any comments about the park, or wish to report anything please contact us.

Oxford City Council Countryside Service

Brasenose Farm, The Eastern Bypass,
Oxford, OX4 2FF

T: 01865 715 830

E: countryside@oxford.gov.uk



Discovering Shotover Country Park



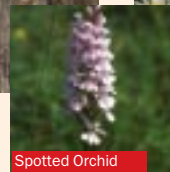
Chrysomela populi



Golden saxafrage



Common Lizard



Spotted Orchid



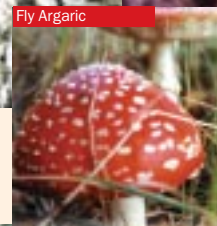
Bloody-nose beetle



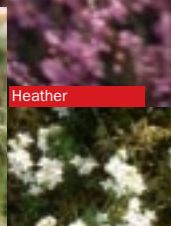
Green Woodpecker



Common Toad



Fly Agaric



Heather



Noctule bat



Orange-tip butterfly

Shotover Country Park offers everyone a chance to enjoy a place of beauty and history right on the edge of Oxford. Covering 117 hectares (289 acres) on the southern slopes of Shotover Hill there are spectacular views from the top across south Oxfordshire. The park is an intimate mosaic of hidden valleys, varied landscapes and diverse habitats, a haven for wildlife and an ideal setting for peaceful enjoyment of the countryside.

Shotover is open to everyone to enjoy throughout the year free of charge and is ideal for a summer picnic, leisurely strolls, a walk with the dog, jogging, riding, or orienteering. Are you making the most of the countryside on your doorstep? Discover how much Shotover Country Park has to offer!

Things to Do and Facilities

Trails

There are three way-marked trails to guide you through the Park. They all start in Mary Sadler's Field, near the car park. Assuming a relaxed pace the red trail will take half an hour, the yellow 45 minutes and the green about 2 hours.

Bridle route

For horse riders and cyclists there are 5km of paths to follow. The route starts from Shotover Plain near the car park. Please follow the blue arrows.

Orienteering

There is a 20-station orienteering course around the Park. Look out for the distinctive red and white marker posts. Orienteering maps can be obtained from Touchwood Sports, 426 Abingdon Road, Redbridge, Oxford.

Sandpit

For children the most popular haunt is a natural sandpit in which they may spend hours building castles or damming the tiny stream. Follow the red trail to get to it.

Disabled paths and access

There is a network of paths around the lower parts of the Country Park accessible to wheelchair users. Access is from Brasenose Farm on Oxford's Eastern Bypass. You may need a key to gain entry. Please phone 01865 715830 for details.

Other paths

There is an extensive network of paths on Shotover. Those that are on the map are checked and maintained by the rangers. There are also many other paths and desire lines, some only seasonal, that you can discover for yourself.

Events

Shotover Country Park is a popular venue for a range of different events including guided walks, cross-country races, orienteering competitions, sponsored walks, and treasure hunts etc.

If you would like details of the events being run by Oxford City Council at Shotover or elsewhere please phone 01865 715830 or visit www.oxford.gov.uk.

If you would like to book Shotover as a venue for your public event, no matter how small, please phone 0800 052 1455.

Wildlife

Whether you are a serious naturalist or simply love being in the countryside there is so much to see at Shotover. Ancient woods, flowery meadows, marshes, heaths, ponds and bracken-covered slopes support a wealth of wildlife.

In spring and summer Shotover's woods are carpeted with wild flowers. Celandines and Wood Anemones are first, then Bluebells. As spring turns to summer Common Spotted Orchids, and later Bettony and Saw Wort bloom along woodland rides where White Admiral butterflies soar.

In these woods you can also hear the natural symphony of birdsong provided by summer visitors: Black Cap, Garden and Willow Warbler which join our resident choristers; Blackbird, Wren and Song Thrush.

In Summer the meadows at the bottom of Shotover are rich with the Knapweed, Oxeye Daisy and other wild flowers. Visit them before they are cut in July.

In the valleys at the foot of the hill are springs which feed marshes and pools fringed with aromatic Water Mint.

Further up the slopes in the dry grasslands the delicate white flowers of Heath Bedstraw mingle with the red of Sheep's Sorrel. These grasslands are also popular with Green Woodpeckers, which plunder the many ant nests.

Much of the hill is cloaked in dense stands of Bracken. It gives a special character to Shotover and offers cover to large mammals like Foxes, Muntjac and Roe Deer.

In August the heath in Mary Sadler's Field is suffused with pink by the flowers of Ling Heather. Bare ground within the heaths and grasslands is where many species of solitary bees and wasps dig their burrows and where lizards bask.

Because Shotover is a nationally important wildlife site, most of the Country Park is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

A Potted History of Shotover

The landscape of Shotover has changed throughout its history. From Saxon times until the Civil War (1640s) Shotover was part of a Royal Forest providing a hunting ground for noblemen, fuel and grazing for local people and timber for many of Oxford's historic buildings.

In 1660 Shotover ceased to be a Royal Forest and became open farmland, which was grazed or cultivated.

Until the end of the 18th Century, the main road to London passed across Shotover Plain. Travellers often fell victim to highwaymen here.

From the late 1930s Oxford City Council started to manage Shotover as a park and two wardens were employed to look after it.

During the first half of the 20th Century, farming ceased at Shotover and woodland started to establish.

During World War II, Slade Camp was part of Cowley Barracks and provided a temporary home for soldiers who took part in the D-Day landings. At the same time Shotover Hill was used for military training and tanks built at Cowley were tested there.

From the late 1970s work started to clear woodland to restore heath, grassland and marsh habitats.

Park Opening Times

Open all day every day, free of charge. Organised group activities need permission and a fee may be charged.