



ACCESS GUIDE – SHIDE CHALK PIT LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

The site is inaccessible to all wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Prams and pushchairs will need to be lifted down the steep steps.

Address

Burnt House Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight

Postcode for Sat Nav: PO30 3BB

What 3 Words for site entrance:

///supplied.musician.basically

How to get there:

By Car or bike

The site is accessed from Burnt House Lane which is off St Georges Way. If cycling, the Red Squirrel Trail (NCN 23) passes close to the site – leave the trail at Shide Road.

By Public transport

The Shide Road stop (Routes 2 and 3) is a 95 yard walk. This includes a hill with an incline of 1 in 5.

By Foot

The site is a 0.8 mile walk from central Newport along several road routes or via Connies Way. There is little incline until Burnt House Lane where the hill has an incline of 1 in 5.

Nearest Public toilets

The nearest toilets are under 0.4 mile, and are in store so check opening times – ASDA (what3words ///prune.traded.wizards) .

Out of shop hours there are toilets in South Street, Newport (what3words ///ethic.fired.imprinted) . These are 0.8 miles away.

Car and bike parking

There is a small amount of roadside parking near the site. This is on a hill.

There are cycle racks inside the site entrance, before descending the steps.

Getting onto the site

There are two steps (maximum height 25cm) to the ungated site entrance which is 1.4 meters wide. This leads to a small earth surface. There is a metal chicane that has a width of minimum 79 cm and may hamper access for some buggies etc.

There is a Information Pillar at this point. The site information pillar has a QR code that links to an audible description creating a mind's eye view of the area to allow a visually impaired person to enter with confidence. The information pillar also has a QR code that links to a map and activities. There is also a site map on the Information Pillar.

The site is then reached by a steep decline consisting of slope and steps. This has a 1 in 5 incline and consists of 35 wide steps interspersed with path. The path and steps are minimum 90 cm and there is a handrail 90 cm high only for the uppermost section.

Getting around the site

Once on the site, it is free of stiles, steps and kissing gates. There are no formal paths and the surface consists of gently undulating chalk and grass.

This is an old industrial site and there are many man-made trip hazards such as remains of structures, as well as tree roots. A small area within the site is boggy in wet weather.

The area close to the entrance that leads to the tunnel is always very wet and boggy and access is not advised. The quarry slopes consist of loose scree and should not be accessed. Care should also be taken regarding broken glass.

At the centre of the site there is a low concrete plinth. There is a bench here and other old structures that provide seating opportunities.

There is an information board by the plinth. This gives information on the site and also includes a sensory trail activity.

What you can see

- In summer you can find bee orchids, pyramidal orchids and southern marsh orchids,
- Butterflies include brimstone, orange tip, holly blue, dingy skipper, green hairstreak, wall brown, green-veined white,

speckled wood, comma, small tortoiseshell, common blue, marbled white and chalk hill blue,

- Nests of the yellow meadow ant are noticeable throughout the site,
- Long-tailed tits like the buddleia, but there are also many native plants such as oxeye daisy, the purple-flowered common knapweed and yarrow,
- The shady stream has liverworts and mosses,
- There are a number of structures, mainly brick or concrete, some hidden and some not so that relate to when this was a working quarry,
- Look out for the gated road tunnel. This is not accessible as it is a bat roost.

What you can hear

- High pitch whistles may be a flock of long-tailed tits, while the magpies will screech at each other, they live in holes in the chalk cliff. The cooing is the wood pigeons
- The sound of silence – well not quite, but this site is surprisingly quiet considering its close proximity to the County Town,

What you can smell

- Oxeye daisies have a honey smell.
- Yarrow is a bit cabbagy.

What you can touch

- Put your hands to the chalk slopes or exposed chalk surface and you will understand why the butterflies like to sunbathe on it,
- Feel the shiny leaves of the cotoneaster which grows on the quarry floors and sides. It has berries too,

- Feel the contrasts of manmade material – brick, concrete and metal,

We look after Shide Chalk Pit for the benefit of the plants and animals that live here and for you as visitors...we hope you enjoy your visit.