



Brading Down local nature reserve

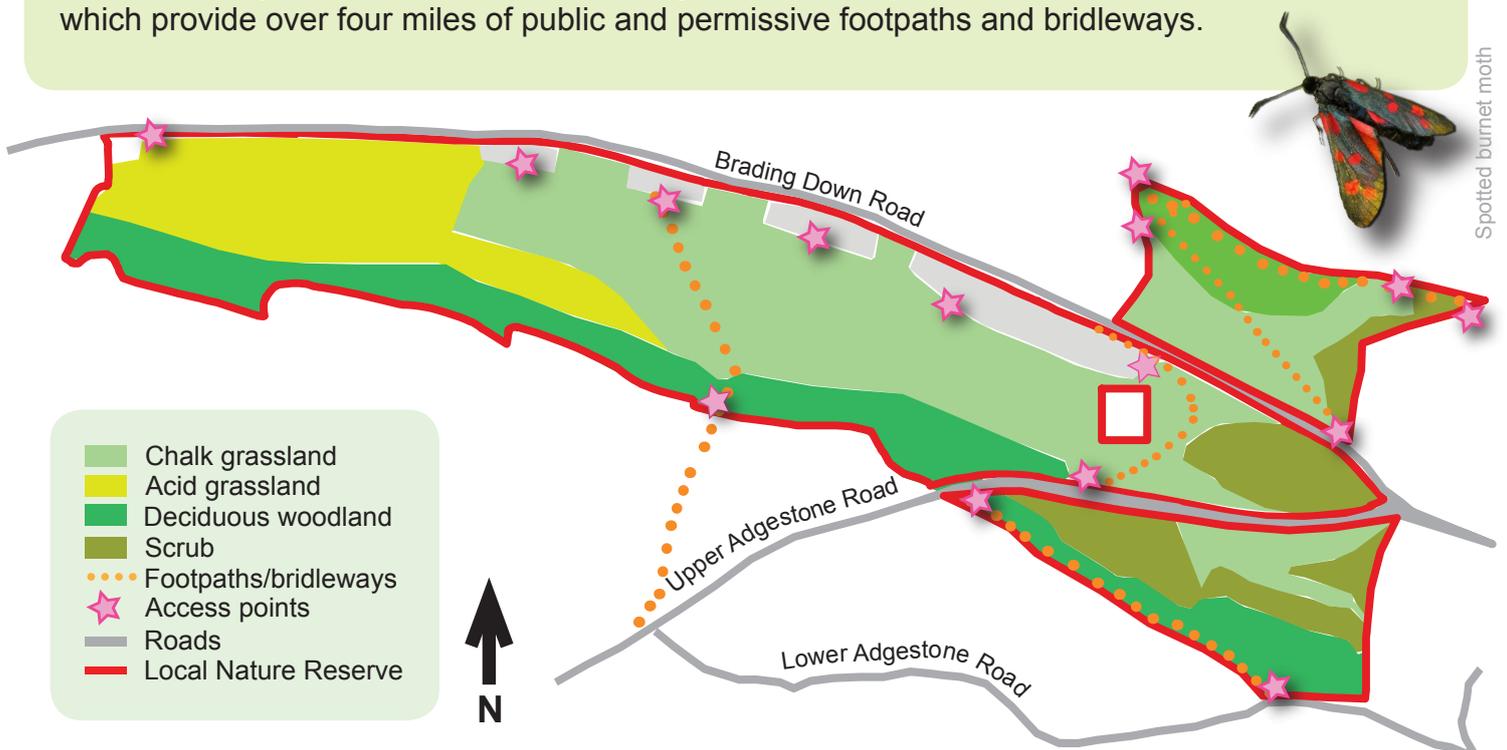


Where is Brading Down Local Nature Reserve?

Brading Down lies at the eastern end of the Island's iconic central chalk ridge and to the west of the gap where the town of Brading is situated (Grid Reference SZ 596 868). It also lies within the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It's one of the Island's most popular sites for recreation, picnicking and wildlife watching, offering stunning panoramic views, a wealth of habitats to explore and opportunities for everyone to enjoy the countryside.

It is crossed by the main Newport to Brading road and footpaths B28, B29, B42, B41 and B65 which provide over four miles of public and permissive footpaths and bridleways.



When can I visit?

Brading Down is always open for walkers. If you are walking over the site with your dog, please keep it under control and do not allow it to worry the grazing animals.

The main area of Brading Down is fenced and grazed but access is available from the car parks bordering the main Newport to Brading Road.



- Top 5 species
- Pyramidal orchid
 - Yellowhammer
 - Spotted burnet moth
 - Kestrel
 - Skylark



Adonis blue

Why is the site so special?

Brading Down provides an impressive viewpoint for visitors to the east of the Island. The Isle of Wight Council owns 35 hectares of south facing chalk grassland - a habitat of national importance.

The thin chalk soils to the east of the site support a typical downland plant community with pyramidal orchids being a particular feature in the summer. In recent years a programme of scrub clearance has been undertaken. The area is good for butterflies including common blue, chalkhill blue, small, large and dingy skippers, marbled white, gatekeeper, and meadow brown.

In addition to the wildlife interest of chalk downland, the ancient field system on Brading Down is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The finest surviving ancient field system on the Island is to be found on the down. This is likely to be of late Iron Age or Roman date and highlights the last time the fields were ploughed. The views over Brading Roman Villa and Sandown Levels reinforce the historical significance of the area.

Pyramidal orchid



Yellowhammer by John Adams