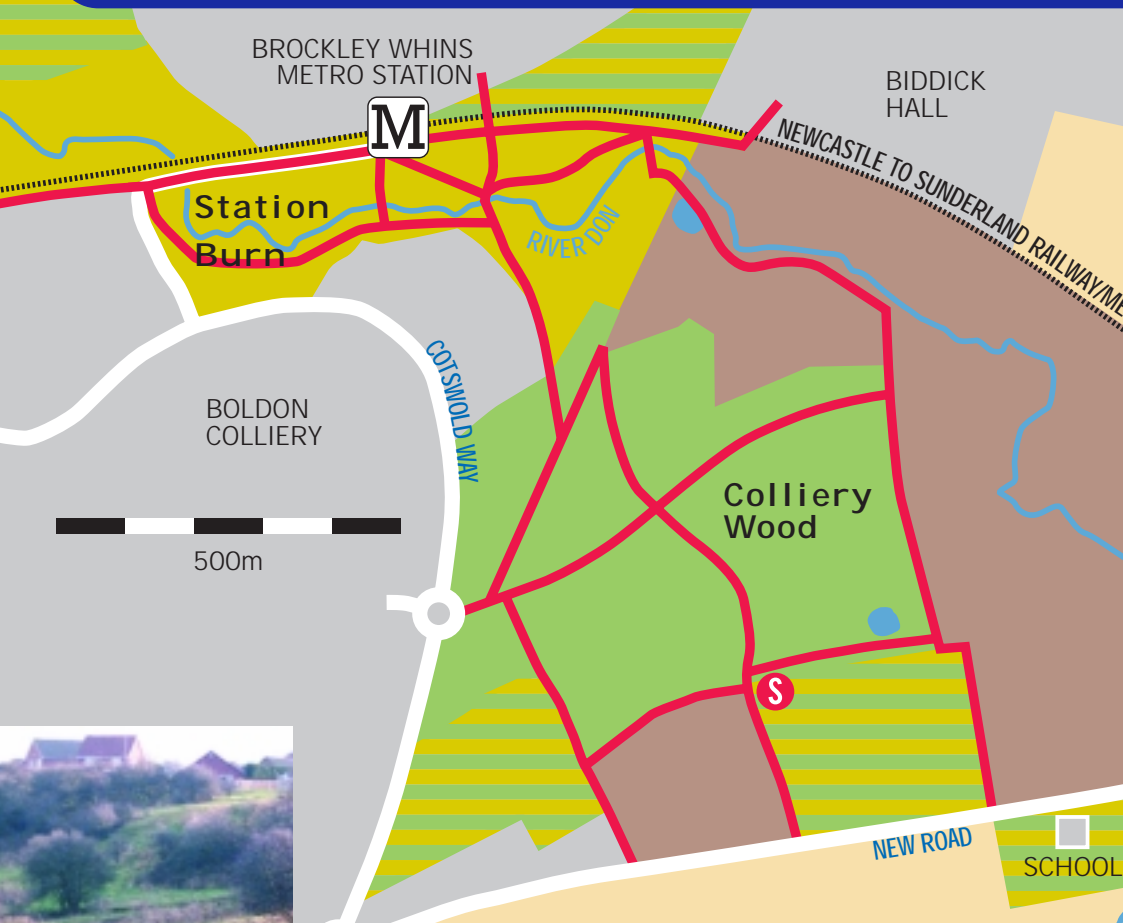


Sites of wildlife interest



5 Station Burn and Colliery Wood



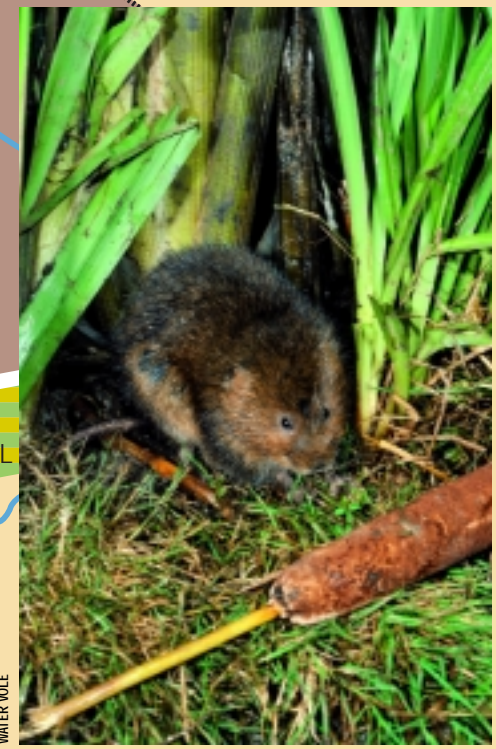
ACCESS
 The main paths are all well surfaced. Those in Colliery Wood are level, but there are some steep slopes in Station Burn. The Branch Out from Brockley trail is a three mile circular route from the railway/metro station, featuring twelve sculptures designed for brass rubbing. The Linnet Way runs along the north of the site.

TRANSPORT
 The area is easily reached from Brockley Whins Metro Station. There is a regular bus service along New Road to the interchange at Boldon Asda (nos 533 and 551).

This is a fascinating mixture of ancient river valley landscapes, industrial history and a reclaimed colliery that, as part of the developing Great North Forest, will mature into the biggest woodland in South Tyneside. It is an excellent spot to look for the attractive, but elusive, water vole and kingfisher.



KINGFISHER



WATER VOLE

The River Don Valley was the site of a watermill for over 500 years up until 1950 - and the remains of George Stephenson's Pontop Waggonway, built in 1834, can still be seen. After the closure of Boldon Colliery in 1982, the site was used for coal-stocking and subsequently reclaimed by the Council in 1999. Now renamed as 'Colliery Wood', the 30 hectare site is rapidly changing as its 50,000 trees and shrubs mature.

Walk quietly along the river bank and you might be lucky enough to see a water vole - a very shy animal distinguished by its rounded face and short furry tail - or you may spot characteristic signs of its presence, such as grazed 'lawns' around the vole's burrows. Always look out for the brilliant blue flash of the kingfisher, a regular sight along the River Don.

A series of ponds holds a multitude of life, including frogs, dragonflies and great diving beetles. The young woodland is ideal for grey partridges and skylarks, but as it grows to maturity it will increasingly attract songbirds like thrushes and warblers.