

Sites of wildlife interest



10 Marsden Old Quarry Local Nature Reserve



GORSE

Renowned throughout the region as a 'hotspot' for exotic migrant birds (and their human admirers), the Quarry is also a marvellous place to see wildflowers and butterflies.

The Council acquired the site in the late 1940s for use as a nature reserve. Its history of limestone quarrying left 60-foot high cliffs and these have since been colonised by a host of wildlife.

In places the soils are thin and the magnesian limestone rock is exposed, creating ideal conditions for a great variety of beautiful and unusual wildflowers to thrive. For the keen-eyed in early summer there is the nationally rare (and aptly-named) blue-moor grass, followed later on by delights such as rock-rose, salad burnet, fairy flax and the delicate autumn gentian, with its purple bell-shaped flowers.

Swathes of gorse bushes with their deep yellow, coconut-scented flowers are host to linnets, whilst at least 18 other types of bird breed in the quarry, including kestrel, goldfinch and greenfinch.

During the autumn when weather conditions are 'right', migrating birds can be blown off course and land exhausted at Marsden Old Quarry. Regulars include redstart and ring ouzel, whilst rarer birds like isabelline shrike, red-breasted flycatcher and Radde's warbler may be spotted here, thousands of miles from their normal home.



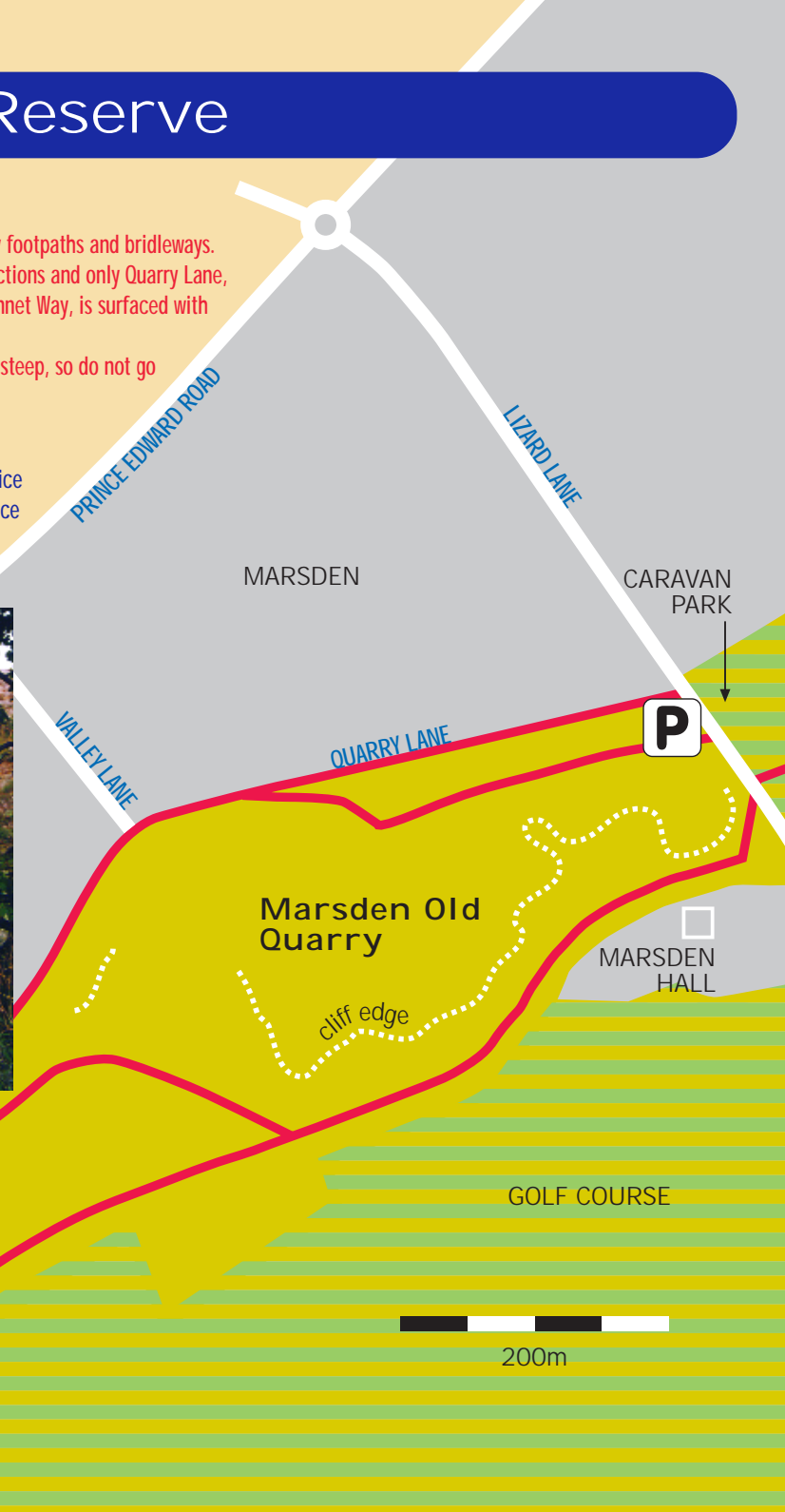
ROCK-ROSE

ACCESS

The site is criss-crossed by footpaths and bridleways. Most are steep in short sections and only Quarry Lane, which forms part of the Linnet Way, is surfaced with rolled stone. Please note: the cliffs are steep, so do not go too close to the edge.

TRANSPORT

There is a regular bus service along Lizard Lane and Prince Edward Road (nos E2, E3 and E6).



PUB

200m