

Welcome to Lockwood Meadows Public Open Space

Lockwood Place Meadows is a species rich meadowland, full of interesting plants and animals. It stretches along the valley floor bounded by the River Gipping.

During your visit, look out for some of our local wildlife:



Kingfishers

You might first see this small but vividly coloured bird as a bright flash of blue and orange flying up and down the river but if you look out for their low-level riverside perches (where they hunt for small fish such as sticklebacks and minnows) you might be lucky enough to spot these beautiful but elusive birds waiting patiently for an opportunity to catch their next meal.



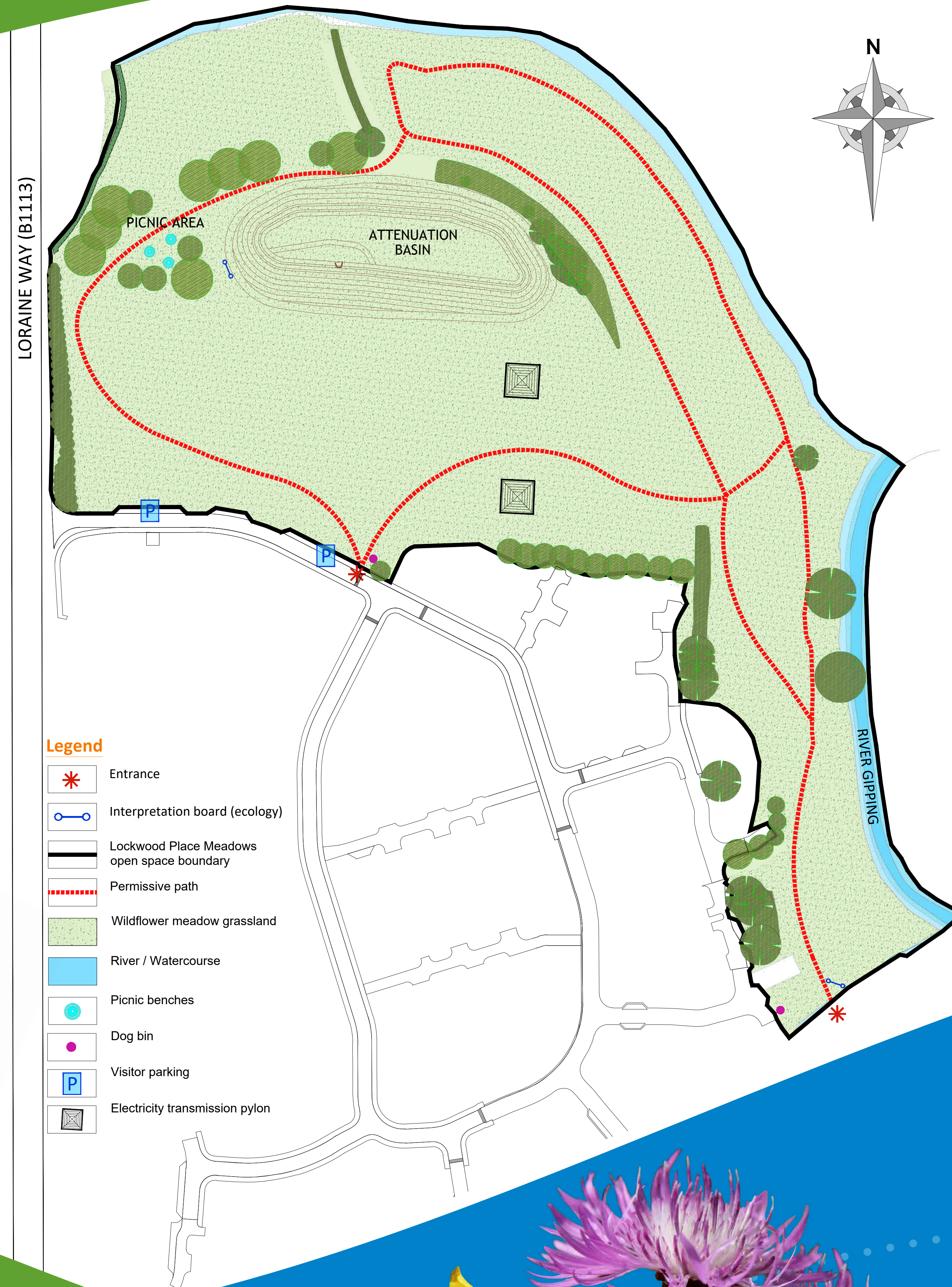
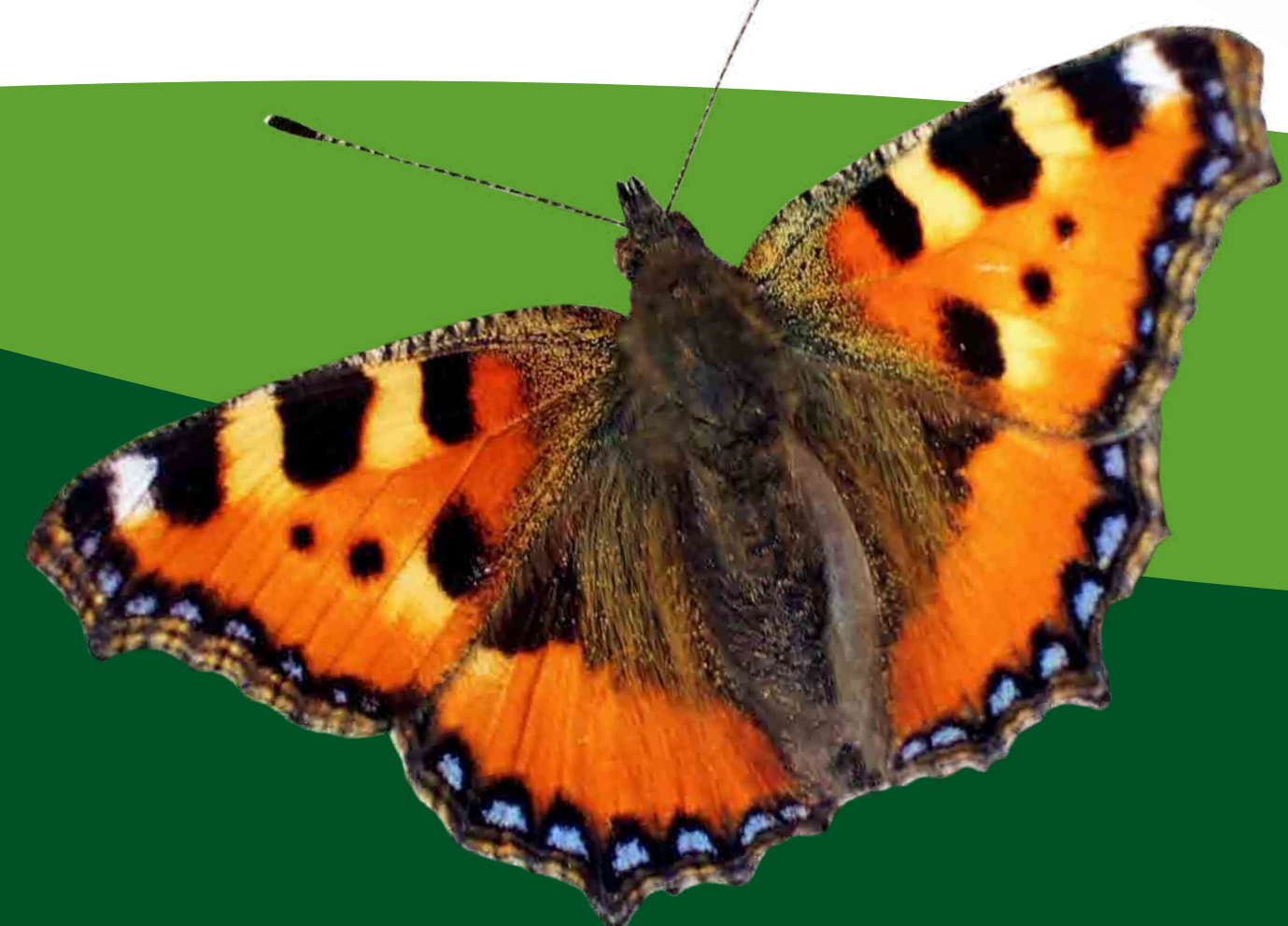
Dragonflies and Damselflies

Look out for these masters of flight – the dragonflies. They can fly in any direction, up, down, forward, backward or hover in one spot (just like helicopters). All four wings can move independently for incredible flight control, changing direction in an instant and they are very fast (flying at up to 35mph). They are superb hunters and catch their prey whilst flying. They live for 5 years underwater as nymphs and then for just 5 months as the large, colourful adults you might see darting up and down the river.

You might also see damselflies – they look very like dragonflies and can be bright blue, green or red but they rest with their wings folded lengthways along their body (unlike dragonflies – they rest with their wings outspread). Watch for the large red damselfly on vegetation by the waters edge, anytime between the end of March and the beginning of September.

Butterflies

We have lots of butterflies at Lockwood Place Meadows throughout the Summer, including brimstone (bright yellow-green), peacock (large eyes on their wings), commas (an orange and brown patterned butterfly with distinct comma shapes cut out along their wing edges) painted lady (another orange brown butterfly with white splotches on their wings), orange tip (white with orange tips), marbled white (patterned white and black), large white (mostly white with a black dot or black edged wings) and the small tortoiseshell (look out for the blue patterning along the bottom of their wings).



Reptiles

As you walk along the paths, you might spot a darting lizard or smooth skinned slowworm. These heat lovers can sometimes be seen basking in sunny spots during the day (they are cold blooded, they need the warmth of the sun).

Our harmless slow worms are lizards not snakes – don't be fooled by their appearance. They are golden-grey and males sometimes have blue spots but the females have a darker stripe down their back. They can blink (snakes can't) and they hunt insects.



Bats

Our one true flying mammal is quite shy, only coming out at night to hunt for insects. They are superb flyers finding their way in the dark by echolocation. Sadly, bats have suffered a huge decline in population numbers and are now one of the most highly protected mammals in the UK. There are over 18 different species but the ones you are most likely to see flying at dusk are the pipistrelles – a tiny bat weighing the same as a 20pence piece but able to eat over 3000 insects in one night – that's a lot of mosquitoes!

Take pride in Lockwood Meadows Public Open Space

- Please keep to the footpaths
- Please keep dogs under strict control
- Please report any vandalism, litter or other incidents
- Please tidy up after your dog
- No cycling on the paths

