



Karum infield

You are now standing on the edge of the villagers' absolutely most important land: the fields and meadows. In the past they were within a single large area, known as the infield. On Öland the infield was called "gärdet". It was protected by a stone wall which you can see in front.

FIELDS AND MEADOWS

In the 19th century, the main crops in Karum were rye and barley. The fields demanded a lot of work. The soil had to be prepared with different implements before sowing. The whole family helped with the harvest.

Grass, flowers and a few trees grew in the meadows. The grass was cut with scythes and left to dry into hay. Hay and dried leaves from the meadow trees became fodder for the animals in winter when they were in the cattle shed. On the infield of Karum, oak trees grew and produced acorns. Acorns were the favourite food of pigs, which could therefore be let on to the infield to eat.

THE MOST IMPORTANT BOUNDARY

Well into the 19th century, the stone infield wall marked the boundary with the village's outlying land. In the outlying land, the farmers' animals roamed and grazed freely. The wall shut the animals out so that they did not eat the crops. So in the past, grazing animals were shut out – today they are instead shut in!

CURVED AND STRAIGHT FORMS

The infield wall was built of stones from the fields. The wall followed the landscape, so it was curved. The wall you can see here on the right of the opening is curved and may be essentially from the 13th-14th centuries. To the left of the opening and along the road the wall is instead straight as an arrow. That part was built at the time of land division in the 1830s, when the village land was divided into new, straight areas.

SPRING INSPECTION OF THE STONE INFELD WALL

Every year around 1 May, the farmers assembled for the spring inspection. They then put back all the stones that had fallen from the wall. In Karum there were about five kilometres of wall to maintain in 1777. At the same time the men took the opportunity to see to it that all the gates to the infield were in good condition.



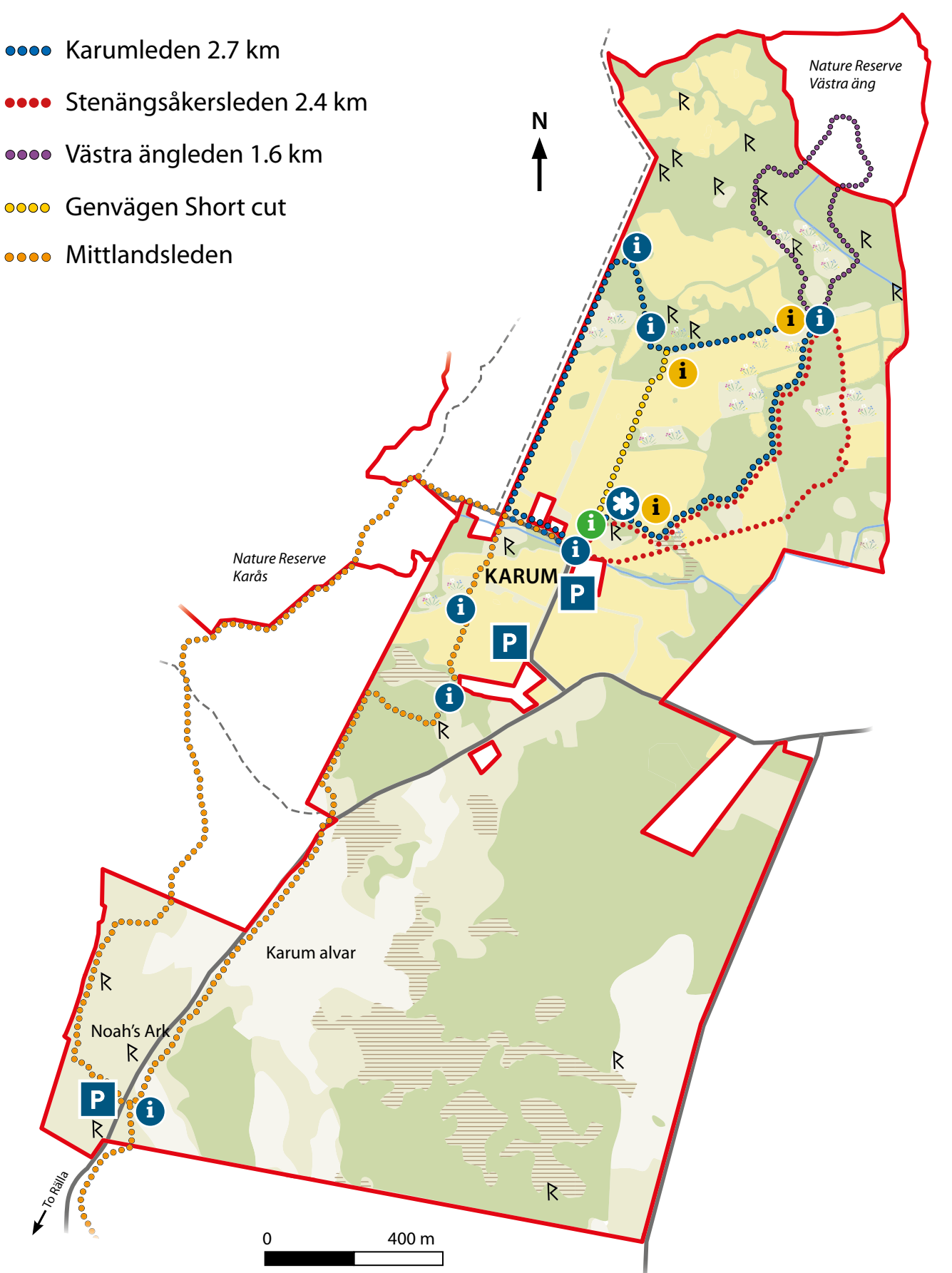
On the map from 1777, the infield with fields and meadows is ringed in with a blue line. Along the line runs the stone infield wall. Outside the infield area were the outlying land where the farmers' livestock grazed. Also on the outlying land stood Svältan, where those villagers who owned no land could live.

INFELD, WATCHMEN AND WILD ANIMALS

Also horses, deer and boars could try to get at the crops and grass. Horses and deer could jump over the stone wall and the boars could ram their way in. The farmers on Öland therefore employed infield watchmen who scared away the animals with smoke, flares and loud shouting.

- You are here
- Kvarnkullen Information centre
- Information board
- Field info-board
- Car park
- Alvar land
- Open land
- Hay meadow
- Wetland/wet meadow
- Farmed land
- Forest/brushland
- Reserve boundary
- Road
- Watercourse
- Ancient remains

- Karumleden 2.7 km
- Stenängsåkersleden 2.4 km
- Västra ängleden 1.6 km
- Genvägen Short cut
- Mittlandsleden



Länsstyrelsen
Kalmar län