

# Carsington Water sensory story

A guide for visitors with cognitive disabilities



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# What is Carsington Water?



Carsington Water is a reservoir surrounded by eight miles of walking trails through woodlands and farmland. There is also a visitor centre where I can find shops, toilets, a restaurant, a play area and an exhibition.

I can enjoy a walk or bike ride through nature, have a look in the shops, or I can have a picnic near the visitor centre. There is a lot of activities that I can choose to do.

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# Facilities at Carsington Water

Carsington Water has three car parks that I may arrive at. These are the main car park, Millfields car park, and Sheepwash car park.

At the main car park I can find the visitor centre, a picnic area, a play area and access the path around the reservoir.

At the visitor centre I can find the reception, exhibition, shops, toilets including a changing places toilet and places to eat and drink. I can also find helpful staff here if I need them.

At Millfields car park I can find toilets, a small shop, and can also find paths to explore.

At Sheepwash car park there are no toilets or shops. From here I can explore the paths or visit nearby bird hides.

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# Arriving at Carsington Water



When I arrive at Carsington Water, I will be in one of the car parks. From here I can decide to explore the walking trails, or stay near to the visitor centre at the main car park.

In the car park I might **see...**

- Cars, buses and other vehicles
- Other people walking around
- People with dogs
- Trees swaying
- People riding bikes or horses.

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In the car park I might **hear**...

- Cars and other vehicles
- Other people talking
- Wind blowing through the trees
- Birds singing
- Children shouting or dogs barking

In the car park I might **touch**...

- The tarmac on the floor
- Stone walls
- Hedges and trees
- Other people brushing past me
- The wind, sun or rain

In the car park I might **smell**...

- Fumes from cars driving by
- Flowers and other plants
- Horses and other animals

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# Inside the visitor centre



If I go inside the visitor centre I can find the reception, helpful staff, and the exhibition. From here I can visit the restaurant upstairs or the courtyard outside. If things get too noisy, I can also ask for ear defenders here.

Inside the visitor centre I might **see**...

- Automatic doors opening and closing
- People walking around or queuing
- Children playing in the exhibition
- Signs with words and pictures
- A television playing videos about water
- Leaflets that I can look at

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## Inside the visitor centre I might **hear**...

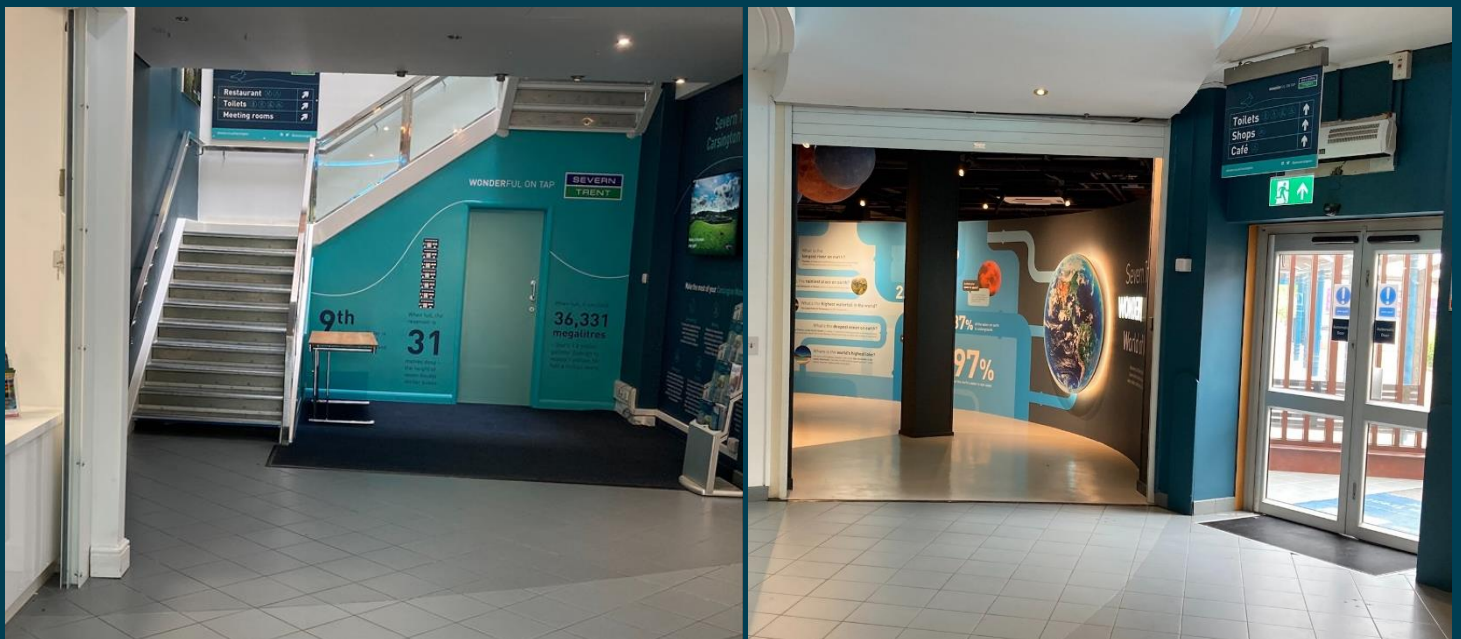
- Automatic doors opening and closing
- People walking up and down the stairs
- People talking and children shouting
- A telephone ringing
- Talking from videos in the exhibition
- Staff talking on walkie talkies

## Inside the visitor centre I might **touch**...

- A wooden bench I can sit on
- A metal hand rail on the staircase
- The button for the lift
- Door handles to the toilets
- Water on my hands when I wash them

## Inside the visitor centre I might **smell**...

- Food from the restaurant



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# Inside the exhibition

If I go to the exhibition inside the visitor centre I can explore and learn all about water and what happens when I flush the toilet. I can walk all the way around and out of the door to the courtyard where I can find shops and a café.

Inside the exhibition I might **see**...

- Walls with words and pictures
- Videos with information about water for me to watch
- Screens with games for me to play
- A container of slime for me to sort through



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## Inside the exhibition I might **hear**...

- People talking and children shouting
- Talking and noise from videos and games in the exhibition
- Objects moving around



## Inside the exhibition I might **touch**...

- Buttons and hard objects
- Objects that can move
- A bench I can sit on
- Slime in a container
- Clothing and a hard hat I can wear





# Inside the restaurant

If I go upstairs to the restaurant, I will find helpful staff that can guide me to a table or help me find what I need. If there is space, I can choose to sit either inside or out on the balcony.

Inside the restaurant I might **see**...

- People queuing or sitting at their tables
- Staff behind the counter or carrying food and drinks
- Large windows with views of the reservoir



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Inside the restaurant I might **hear**...

- People chatting at their tables
- Machines from the kitchen and behind the counter
- Banging from pots and cutlery
- Chairs moving across the floor

Inside the restaurant I might **touch**...

- Tables and chairs
- Metal railings by the counter
- Ceramic plates, bowls and cups
- The breeze, if I decide to sit outside

Inside the restaurant I might **smell**...

- Different foods being cooked

Inside the restaurant I might **taste**...

- The food and drink that I order



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# Inside the café

The Café at Carsington Water is a lot like the restaurant upstairs, but with more seats outside for me to sit and eat my food. I will be able to see, hear, touch, smell and taste a lot of the same things as in the restaurant.

In the café I might see...

- People with dogs
- Insects and other wildlife



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In the café I might **hear**...

- Dogs barking
- Children shouting

In the café I might **touch**...

- Objects being sold in the shop
- A tray for me to carry my food.

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# In the courtyard

If I go to the courtyard, I can look through the shops, go to the café or the toilet, or sit and enjoy views over the water.

In the courtyard I might see...

- Staff working in their shops
- Other visitors walking around, some of them with dogs
- Plants in the garden
- Small birds flying around
- The kugel stone turning
- Signs to tell me what things are and where to go





In the courtyard I might **hear**...

- People chatting
- Automatic doors opening and closing
- Children playing and shouting
- Birds singing

In the courtyard I might **touch**...

- Walls
- Benches
- Cobbled and paved floors
- Doors into shops and toilets
- Water on the kugel stone

In the courtyard I might **smell**...

- Food from the café

In the courtyard I might **taste**...

- Food and drinks from the café
- Ice cream from the ice cream shop





# Outside the visitor centre

Outside the visitor centre I can find fields and paths near the main car park. Here I can have a picnic, visit the play area, or start my walk around the track.

Outside the visitor centre I might **see**...

- Large groups of people eating picnics or playing
- People running
- Trees swaying
- Kites flying
- Staff walking around in hi-vis clothing



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## Outside the visitor centre I might **hear**...

- People chatting
- Children shouting
- Dogs barking
- Cars in the car park
- Geese and other birds calling
- Staff talking on walkie-talkies

## Outside the visitor centre I might **touch**...

- Grass in the fields
- Picnic benches
- Leaves on trees and bushes
- Wind on my skin

## Outside the visitor centre I might **smell**...

- Food from picnics

## Outside the visitor centre I might **taste**...

- The food I bring for a picnic or buy from the shops



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# In the play area

In the play area I can find lots of equipment to play with. I can choose what to play with here or sit on one of the benches.

At the play area I might **see**...

- Children playing
- People sitting on benches
- Lots of bright colours and equipment to play with.

At the play area I might **hear**...

- Children shouting
- Objects turning and swinging
- Music playing from interactive equipment



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At the play area I might **touch**...

- Spongey floors
- Ropes, chains and metal bars
- Benches
- Metal fences
- Objects that move, turn, swing and see-saw

At the play area I might **taste**...

- Food and drink



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# At Carsington

# Sports and Leisure

If I go to Carsington Sports and Leisure, I can find helpful staff to ask about renting bikes, boats, and watersports equipment.

At Carsington Sport and Leisure I might **see**...

- Staff and other people wearing lifejackets
- Bikes, boats and sports equipment
- People riding bikes



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At Carsington Sports and Leisure I might **hear**...

- Staff and other visitors talking
- Voices from walkie talkies
- Splashing and shouting from the water
- Cars parking

At Carsington Sports and Leisure I might **touch**...

- Equipment that I rent like bikes or boats
- A life jacket if I need one
- Leaflets or items in the shop
- The water and wind on my skin if I want to try a watersport
- Pebbles on the shore





# On the tracks

If I choose to walk or cycle along the tracks, I can find bird hides, trees, woodlands, fields, and wide-open spaces. If I use a map I can choose where I would like to explore.

On the tracks I might see...

- Other people walking, cycling or riding horses
- Dogs with their owners
- Sheep in fields
- Wildlife and countryside views



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## On the tracks I might **hear**...

- Other people talking
- Dogs barking
- Animals and wildlife calling
- Bikes going by
- Horses hooves on the track

## On the tracks I might **touch**...

- The wind on my skin
- Stones on the path
- Railings on bridges
- Grass in fields
- Benches and wooden sculptures

## On the tracks I might **smell**...

- Plants around the paths
- Animal waste from fields



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# At the Wildlife Centre and other bird hides

If I go to the wildlife centre or other bird hides, I must be quiet. These are places that I can relax and enjoy spotting wildlife.

At the bird hides I might see...

- People looking through binoculars
- Volunteers who can help me to spot birds
- Posters with information about wildlife
- Views of islands in the water
- Birds outside the windows





At the bird hides I might **hear**...

- People talking quietly or whispering
- Birds singing
- Water splashing in the reservoir

At the bird hides I might **touch**...

- Benches and ledges
- Binoculars touching my face



# Tips for a great day out

- Before I come to Carsington water, it is a good idea to think about the time I'm going to visit. If I visit in the middle of the day or during school holidays, it is more likely to be busy. At weekends there are sometimes big events happening.
- I should stick to the rules and read the signs that are there to keep everyone safe. For example I should not swim or paddle, I must keep my dog on a lead and I should not bring a BBQ.
- I should remember the ranger team are there to help if I need them. I can contact them at reception or by calling 0330 6780 701.
- I can find more information about accessibility at Carsington Water on the website:  
<https://www.stwater.co.uk/our-visitor-sites/carsington-water/>



# Carsington Water maps



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[stwater.co.uk/daysout](http://stwater.co.uk/daysout)

