

Welcome to Bowlees Visitor Centre – a visual story

This visual story helps visitors to know what to expect on a visit to Bowlees Visitor Centre, especially autistic and other neurodivergent people, though it may be of use to a wide range of people. We are doing our best to keep this page up to date, but please be aware that it is not perfect.

The visitor centre, paths and car park can be busy especially on sunny days, but it changes a lot. Mornings are usually quieter than afternoons. Sometimes there are no spaces available in the car park on busy days.

Car park

When you turn off the main road, take the left turn to go towards the disabled bay if you need it or go straight ahead for the main car park.



The car park is surrounded by trees and there is a small stream to one side.

The car park is one way. Enter to the left. The car park can get busy with vehicles, people and dogs moving around.



There is a ticket machine in front of the small building to pay for car parking. People choose how much to pay. We suggest a donation of £3.

You can pay at the ticket machine in the car park with coins or pay inside the visitor centre by card.



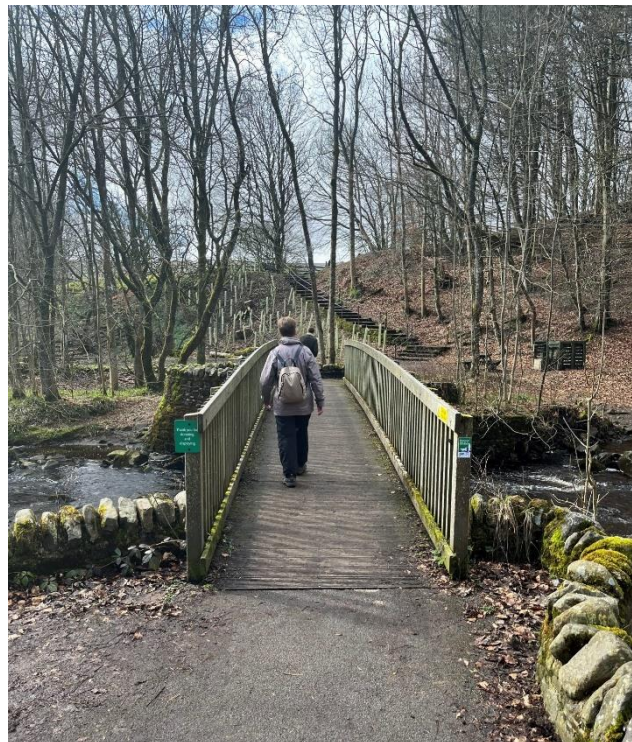
Walking from the main car park to Bowlees Visitor Centre

Follow the green signs in the car park pointing towards Bowlees Visitor Centre.



It is 100 metres (less than a five minute walk) from the main car park to the visitor centre.

The signs will lead you to a wooden bridge that crosses a small stream.



You will see a circle of benches on your left which is sometimes used for events and a mud kitchen on the right.



In front of you will be a steep set of steps. Go up the steps.

When you reach the path at the top you will see the visitor centre building. There is another set of stone steps down to get to the building, toilet block and picnic benches.



From the disabled parking area

The disabled parking spaces are at the front of the visitor centre on a flat, gravel area.

There is a wheelchair-accessible ramp at the entrance of the building and level access to the picnic area and toilet blocks at the rear.



Electric vehicle charging point

The charging point is to the left of the ramp at the front of the visitor centre. This is also a disabled car parking space so may not be available.

Enter the visitor centre using the ramp.



Toilets

The toilet block is next to the visitor centre building. There are two toilets that anyone may use.



One toilet has disabled access and is bigger, with baby changing facilities.

The toilets have automatic lights and these will turn on when you open the door.

The hand dryers can be very loud.



In the visitor centre

There is a door at the back of the building near the toilets, and one at the front of the building at the top of the ramp.

Inside the building there is a café, some displays, a shop and an information desk.

The centre can be loud when busy. You might hear lots of people talking and sounds from the café like the coffee machine.

All areas of the ground floor are accessible using ramps.

A member of our team will be there to help you. They can give information about the area and places to explore. If you are buying something from the shop, please take it to the information desk to pay.



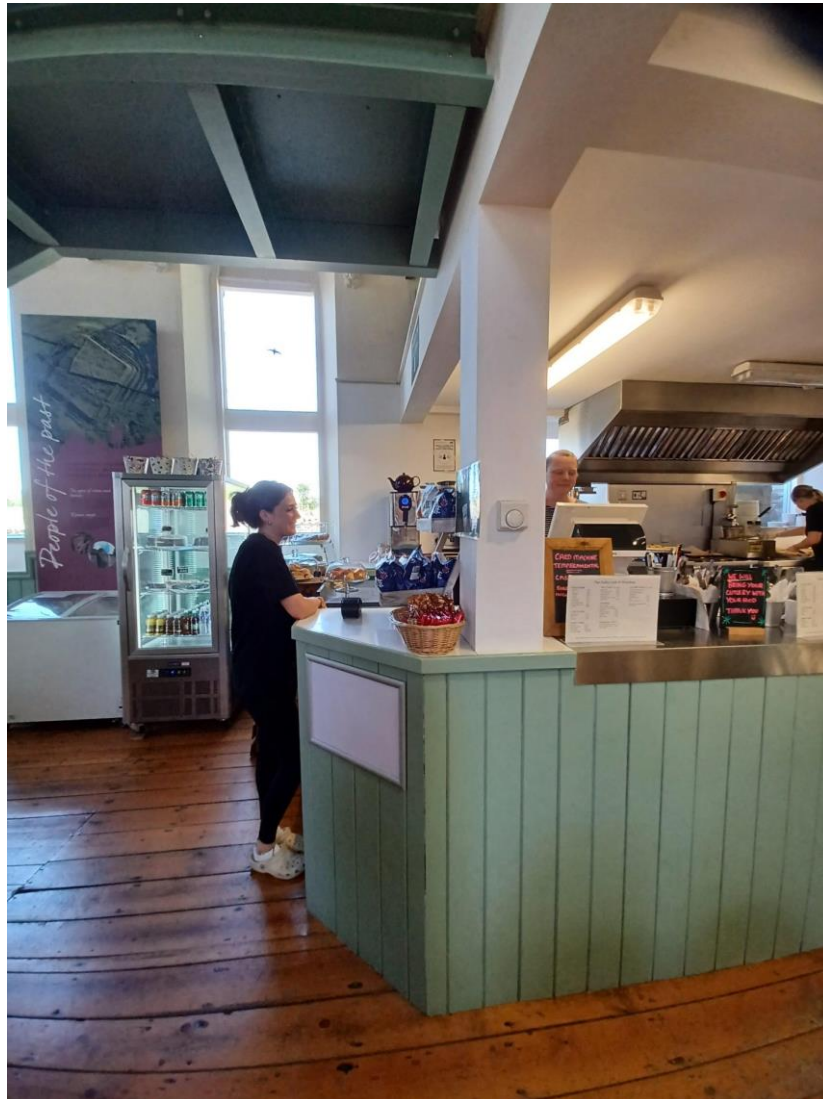
There is a café seating area and menus are usually on the tables.



You order food and drink at the café counter.

If you need to order at your table and need assistance, please let staff know.

Cash payment can be taken at the table but card payment can only be taken at the counter. There is a minimum card spend.



People can bring dogs into the centre. Dogs should be kept on a lead.



The centre is heated with a log burner. There could be a smell of smoke from the fire.



There is free wi-fi in the Visitor Centre though it is sometimes unreliable. Phone signal in the area also varies and is not always available on all networks.

Upstairs

Upstairs is a gallery space where we display art and photographs. There are tables and chairs, and it can be a quieter place to sit. Dogs are not allowed upstairs.

The only access to the gallery is by using the steps. The gallery is sometimes closed for events.



We are always trying to improve the information we provide. If you have comments on this visual story please let us know by emailing communications@northpenninesaonb.org.uk