

Burrator... so much



Burrator has been supplying the residents for Plymouth with drinking water since 1898. The reservoir and its surrounding area are owned by South West Water, managed by the charity South West Lakes Trust, and it lies within the Dartmoor National Park boundary.

South West Lakes Trust aims to protect and preserve the natural environment (terrestrial and historical) for the public, provide educational opportunities, and promote public access and sustainable recreation. We aim to provide a balance between the lakes' primary purpose as a water supply and safe access and enjoyment of these beautiful places for the public.

The Burrator catchment contains a wealth of archaeological remains: bronze age hut circles and burial cairns, medieval farm ruins, and remains of the tin working industry. The site is of huge conservation importance and is home to a wealth of flora and fauna. In addition the area provides a unique resource for geographical and geological studies. There is so much to do here throughout the seasons:



"WOW, what a fab resource. We saw it in the early stages and the finished centre is so successful as a staging post for events. My children via school helped with the designs on the totem pole in the entrance, which they love having that link. I cannot speak highly enough of this building, steeped in history but brimming with up to date thinking and tech. A stunning location and backdrop for many an event I have attended."

Come and visit the Burrator Discovery Centre (PL20 6PE) that opened in July 2014. Lots of information and interactive exhibits explaining what was here pre-reservoir, how the reservoir was constructed, and introduces the railway, farming, tin working, and much more. The Centre is open every week Tuesday-Thursday and alternating days at weekends (see www.swlakestrust.org.uk for specific days). Our volunteer visitor guides are on hand to help you explore the centre, provide information on different walks, and answer any other questions.

"Thanks to the arboretum easy access trail, all of the young adults from Dame Hannahs are able to enjoy nature and the outdoors, despite the variety of wheelchairs they have ... Being in the outdoors provides a multi-sensory experience for everybody so thanks to the arboretum we are all able to enjoy this!"

Explore the Arboretum, enjoy walking along the boardwalk and get close to the wildlife that thrive in this wetland habitat. If you turn left through the gate you will find our 1.5km easy access trail, restored in April 2014.



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more than just a Dam!

Go back through time and imagine what life was like being a farmer here before the reservoir existed. There are many farm ruins around the reservoir however three have their own artistic illustrations which were revealed in September 2014, after the consolidation works had been completed: Leathertor Farm, Lowery Barn and Longstone Manor. In addition we have a series of 5 themed self-guided walks on the old farms, tin working and the railway, available in the Discovery Centre.

"The evening talks began when we moved to the area, and were invaluable to us in giving an insight into the heritage and the amenity value of the Burrator area and the wider Dartmoor landscape. The walks have been excellent and informative and sometimes physically challenging, and we keep a folder of the trail leaflets for visitors."

Come and learn more about the area by attending one of our evening talks, guided walks, exhibitions, family wildlife watch sessions, or school holiday family activity drop in days.

"As a family we have found attending the family sessions & fun days to be a fun way of learning about our environment. The activities are always well thought out & everyone is always very welcoming. The minimal charges do not go unappreciated either. We always look forward to coming and enjoying the facilities & surroundings & offering these sessions has encouraged us to do it more often."

"Burrator is an idyllic place to visit, there is lots of history and many features that have been retained. It is a place like no other. I would recommend the volunteering to anyone such a great experience."

Get involved! Join in with one of our practical volunteering days carrying out a wide range of conservation and archaeological projects. No experience necessary, just lots of enthusiasm! There are also some indoor volunteering opportunities too.

For more information please ring 01822 855700, e-mail: heritage@swlakestrust.org.uk or pop into the Discovery Centre ■