

south east water



Osprey Trail

Arlington Reservoir Local Nature Reserve



Pure knowh₂ow

Welcome to Arlington Reservoir

Local Nature Reserve and Osprey Trail

Set in 248 acres of beautiful landscape, Arlington Reservoir lies in tranquil surroundings in the Low Weald, with the South Downs National Park and the Long Man of Wilmington as a backdrop. In 1980 Arlington Reservoir was designated a Local Nature Reserve, and since 1985 a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

It is a haven for wildlife such as common spotted orchids, butterflies and of course, ospreys!

Why is the reservoir here?

Increasing demands for water in the early 1960s meant that new sources of water had to be found in the area. The decision was therefore made to build a new pumped storage reservoir at Arlington.

Construction began in 1969. The reservoir was formed by cutting off a meander in the River Cuckmere with a concrete faced earth dam. The underlying weald clay provided a natural watertight base.

Spoil from the construction works was distributed around the edges of the reservoir, creating the earth dam and the beautiful landscape we see today.

During excavations, several important animal remains were discovered, including a mammoth tusk, a bison horn and the skull of a woolly rhinoceros dating from around 250,000 years ago.



Construction work on the reservoir and dam began in 1969



Animal remains were discovered, including a mammoth tusk



Read more online at
southeastwater.co.uk/reservoirs



Enjoy the great outdoors

Apart from its main function as an essential water resource, the beautiful setting makes it a popular area for quiet outdoor pursuits such as walking, riding, bird watching and nature study.

As a Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, we manage the reservoir site to help wildlife thrive.

Pockets of woodland around the site provide a safe haven for numerous bird species, including great crested grebe, Canada geese, kingfisher and barn owl. Up to 10,000 wildfowl spend their winter here including large numbers of mallard, wigeon and shoveler. Osprey can often be spotted in March and September as they visit the reservoir during their long migration to and from Africa.

As guardians of the environment, we own or manage 33 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, a National Nature Reserve, two Local Nature Reserves and numerous Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Our large team of environmental experts also works with farmers and landowners to protect the quality of the rivers and underground aquifers which we use to produce clean drinking water.



Ospreys are frequent visitors to Arlington



The hide is the perfect spot to observe the wide variety of birds

Dogs are very welcome but please keep them on a lead at all times and remember to pick up after them.





Use water wisely

Water is precious, especially here in the south east, which is classed as an area of serious water stress by the Environment Agency. Come rain or shine, we can all use less water. Here are some top tips to help you save water and save money:

- Only use the washing machine or dishwasher when you have a full load
- Take our four minute challenge and have a shorter shower instead of a bath
- Wash your car with a bucket and sponge instead of a hose
- Fill the kettle with the right amount of water, rather than topping it up until it's full
- Install a water butt and use the rain collected in your garden
- Water plants early in the morning or late in the evening to prevent evaporation
- Wrap up for winter – lag your pipes in winter to prevent bursts
- Fix dripping taps – they can waste a litre of water per hour
- Check your toilet for water continually running inside the bowl
- Don't pour money down the drain – check for leaks in pipes around the house



For more water saving tips visit
southeastwater.co.uk/savewater

Pure know h₂ow



Facts about the reservoir

The reservoir was completed and opened in 1971. Today it supplies up to 23 million litres of water a day to thousands of South East Water customers.

- Maximum depth
11.3 metres
- Area of reservoir
49 hectares
- Maximum capacity
3,500 million litres
- Length of its shoreline
2.8 kilometres
- Length of the dam wall
1 kilometre
- Recorded birds
173 species
- Recorded butterflies
21 species



Reed warbler



Common blue
butterfly

How to find Arlington Reservoir

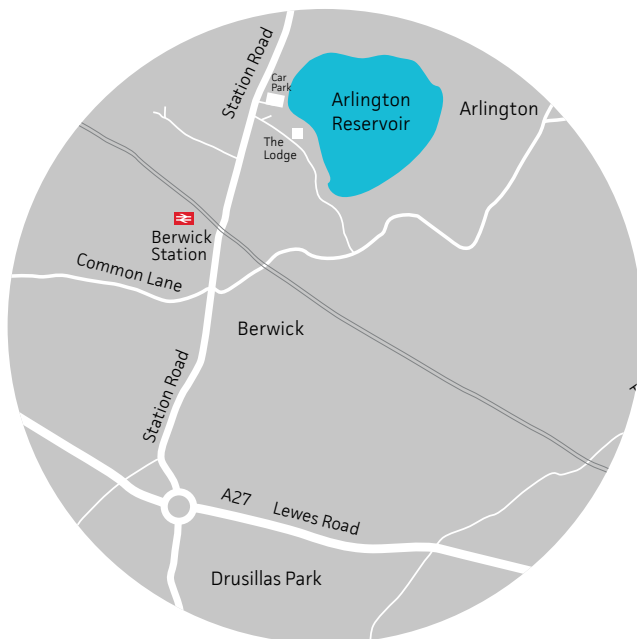
Arlington Reservoir can be found approximately 1.5 miles north of the A27 Lewes to Eastbourne road from the Drusillas roundabout – signposted to Berwick Station and Upper Dicker.

Arlington Reservoir,
Berwick, Near Polegate,
East Sussex, BN26 6TF

Public car park

Grid reference:
TQ 52824 07484

What3words:
/// kicked.scoop.roosters



How to contact us

Our Customer Service Centre is open:

Monday to Friday from 8am to 7pm

Saturday from 8am to 1pm

We are closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays



southeastwater.co.uk/environment



southeastwater.co.uk/contact



Facebook and Twitter: @sewateruk



South East Water
Rocfort Road
Snodland
Kent ME6 5AH

Osprey Trail

Arlington Reservoir Local Nature Reserve

The level, circular trail around the reservoir is approximately three kilometres long and takes around an hour to complete, walking at a leisurely pace.

Turn left on to the footpath in front of the car park and follow the numbered way marker posts. Each numbered post relates to information on the map.

We hope you enjoy your walk and please remember the Countryside Code – leave only footprints, take only photos.

Dogs are very welcome but please keep them on a lead at all times and remember to pick up after them.

What to look out for

Follow the way markers and see if you can spot everything pictured. If you see anything special please let us know!



Osprey Trail Way marker

Way marker 8

At the final stop on the Osprey Trail you'll find one of the many ponds on the nature reserve. The ponds provide important wetland habitats for a huge variety of water loving creatures, both big and small – from aquatic insects and algae through to the animals that feed on them, such as several species of bat which feed on the insects. This pond is also home to three species of newt, including the rare and protected great crested newt.

The pond-dipping platform is perfect for visiting school groups to discover and explore pond life – finding dragonfly nymphs, pond skaters, water boatmen and amphibians like frogs and newts is always popular!



Common frog



Great crested newt

Way marker 7

Arlington has four barn owl nesting boxes erected on poles around the site. Barn owls are now increasingly rare in the UK. Management of the surrounding grassland areas provides suitable habitats for small mammals, which are essential for barn owls to thrive, and will help ensure their future survival.



Dogs are very welcome but please keep them on a lead at all times and remember to pick up after them.



Barn owl

Way marker 1

The reeds (*Phragmites Australis*) in front of you have been planted and provide an ideal nesting and feeding habitat for many animals, as well as helping to protect the reservoir banks from erosion. See if you can spot wagtails, warblers, kingfishers and wildfowl.



Circular trail around the reservoir



Reeds provide an ideal nesting and feeding habitat

Way marker 2

The grassland areas of the nature reserve are managed as wildflower meadows. They are cut on a two-year rotation during September and October. The clippings are removed to keep the soil fertility low. If they were left where they are cut, it would encourage coarse grasses to grow and not the colourful wildflowers we all enjoy.



Wildflower meadows

Way marker 3

The nature reserve was originally planted with 30,000 native trees, including: oak, birch, wild cherry, hazel and hawthorn. The surrounding woodland contains coppiced hazel trees (underwood) interspersed with oak and ash trees (standards). Regular thinning and coppicing of these trees has increased the biodiversity and conservation value of the site.

The word "coppice" comes from the French word "couper" (to cut) and refers to woodland that is periodically cut back to stumps or stools. Coppicing also provides a valuable and sustainable source of wood, which is traditionally used in a wide range of rural crafts.

Regrowth from a cut stool is rapid – around two metres a year. The interval between cuts is called the "rotation", which at Arlington is seven years.

The diverse structure of the woodland attracts a wide variety of wildlife species, including: nightingales, chiffchaff, voles, shrews and speckled wood butterflies, as well as rare and protected dormice.



Dormouse

Way marker 4

In front of you is an example of the traditional craft known as "hedge laying", once a common sight in the Sussex countryside. Hedge laying involves selecting and bending suitable young tree stems called "pleachers" at 30 degrees. They are cut leaving sufficient cambium and sapwood to allow the pleacher to bend and still grow. Stakes and binding, or heatherings, are then added to strengthen the laid hedge (see diagram below).

Hedge laying provides ideal habitats for many species of wild animals, such as hedgehogs, voles, shrew, dormice and birds.



Stakes 60cm apart
Pleachers laid at about 30°

Bird hide opened in 1995



A wide variety of birdlife can be seen

Grid references and What3Words

- A** Public car park
TQ 52824 07484
/// kicked.scoop.roosters
- B** Picnic area
TQ 52865 07475
/// presented.suitcase.footsteps
- C** The Kiosk
TQ 52808 07436
/// entrust.turkey.roughness
- D** The Lodge
TQ 52894 07414
/// stooping.coasting.trickling
- E** Dam wall (Polhills Farm end)
TQ 53202 06946
/// again.chats.whirlpool
- F** Dam wall (Bird hide end)
TQ 53774 07601
/// armful.crabmeat.gentlemen
- G** Bird hide
TQ 53690 07667
/// intersect.keep.minute



Map key

- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Osprey Trail
- Accessible toilet
- Defibrillator (at The Lodge)
- Lifebuoy
- No Entry
- Parking
- Picnic area
- Way marker
- The Kiosk
- Toilets

Way marker 6

Arlington Reservoir is a pumped storage reservoir. This means water is pumped into the reservoir over the winter months from the River Cuckmere when there's sufficient water flowing in the river.

In front of you and built out over the reservoir is a building called a "valve tower". Inside the tower are three draw off points which are used to abstract water, which is then treated for drinking at the nearby treatment works, using a variety of filtration and treatment processes. Once treated, the high quality drinking water goes into the distribution network which supplies thousands of South East Water customers in Eastbourne, Polegate, Hailsham, Heathfield and their surrounding areas.



Reservoir valve tower

Way marker 5

Turn right off the main footpath and you'll find the bird hide at the end of the path, overlooking the bird sanctuary. The hide was opened in 1995 and is the perfect spot to observe the wide variety of birds that are either indigenous, or choose Arlington as a favourite stopover on their spring and autumn migrations. The wide variety of bird species you're likely to spot include: great crested grebe, Canada geese, kingfisher, widgeon, common sandpipers, lapwings, swallows and house martins.

Up to 10,000 wildfowl spend their winters here, including large numbers of pochard, widgeon, mallard and shoveler. And, between March and October the reservoir is an important feeding area for osprey. Arlington's importance for overwintering wildfowl has led to it being designated by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The hide is very popular with bird watchers, so please enter as quietly as possible. For the best views of the wildfowl and to avoid disturbing other people, please:

- Talk and move around quietly
- Do not lean or reach beyond the windows
- Make room for newcomers
- Please ensure that the windows are closed when leaving the hide

There are displays to help you identify the birds and the times of year you are most likely to spot them. There is also a board where you can share your sightings with other visitors. We'd love to hear if you have any rare sightings!