

Tarn Hows Access Statement:

Near Coniston, Cumbria

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Introduction:

Tarn Hows is a man-made tarn situated North East of Coniston and North West of Hawkshead. Combining spectacular views to the wider fells and a tranquil lakeside setting amongst mature trees with ease of access, Tarn Hows is a very popular outdoor site with around 230,000 visitors each year. A circular path of compacted gravel leads visitors in a loop from the main car park around the tarn. This circular path is approximately 1.6 miles long and is easy to follow with wide, well-maintained paths and good signage.

The site is staffed throughout the year, usually 7 days per week, from 10am to 3pm, and has a good car park and toilet facilities including an accessible toilet. Tarn Hows is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, for this reason camping, fires, swimming, boating and fishing are not permitted. As Tarn Hows is an outdoor site in an area where weather can be unpredictable visitors are advised to bring appropriate outdoor clothing.

Dogs:

All dogs are welcome at Tarn Hows, but must be kept on the lead on the main footpath and around the tarn due to sensitive nature of the site and the volume of visitors.

Livestock:

As part of ongoing conservation work with the farm tenant at Tarn Hows, livestock graze the site throughout the year. Visitors are advised that the Belted Galloway cattle and Herdwick sheep at Tarn Hows do not pose a danger to visitors and should simply be left alone.

Tramper PMV hire:

Trampers, off-road personal mobility vehicles, can be hired free of charge at Tarn Hows (a voluntary donation is much appreciated). By arrangement staff can bring a Trampler to and from a visitor's vehicle at the start and end of their visit. Booking at least 48 hours in advance of the visit is recommended to avoid disappointment on the day. Bookings can be made over the phone to the National Trust South Lakes Property Office on 01539441456. In poor weather Trampers may not be available.

Arrival and parking in the main car park:

Tarn Hows is reached via narrow country roads with passing places. It is signposted from the B5285 in both directions and again signposted on the Barnsgate road. Visitors are advised to follow signposts from Coniston or Hawkshead Hill and not to use satellite navigation systems to find Tarn Hows.

Parking is free for National Trust members, non-members can purchase a parking ticket at £5 for 2 hours, £6.50 for 2 to 4 hours or £7.50 for the whole day. Blue badge holders park for free. There are two pay-for-parking machines; one near the pedestrian exit and the other in the middle of the main carpark. The parking machines accept coins only.

The main carpark is a mixture of tarmac roads leading into the carpark and then the carpark itself is constructed of compacted gravel. Two parking spaces reserved for disabled visitors are available at the top of the car park next to the pedestrian exit to the Tarn.

Short stay viewing car park:

In addition to the main visitor car park, a short stay viewing car park is available to those who wish to simply stop and admire the view without leaving their car. This can be found on the road to the main car park and is clearly signposted. There is no charge for the viewing car park, but visitors are asked not to stop there for any longer than 15 minutes.

Catering:

An ice cream van (not National Trust) serving snacks and hot drinks regularly visits the main car park during the summer months.

WCs:

Toilets including an accessible toilet are located at the back of the main car park (opposite direction from the pedestrian exit) next to the education room. The accessible toilet is approximately 2.5 meters by 2.2 meters. There are fold down rails attached to the wall on the right hand side of the accessible toilet as well as fixed bars on the left hand side of the toilet. There are no adult changing facilities on the site. The closest adult changing facilities are at Kendal Leisure Centre. There is limited natural light in the toilets, which are lit by LED bulbs. The floor of the toilet block is covered by textured anti-slip laminate tiles. As Tarn Hows is situated in a Site of Special Scientific Interest and the toilets are designed to limit the amount of water used, hand sanitizing gel is available in the male and female toilets and in the baby changing room, but no running water or soap. There are no hand dryers. The accessible toilet does have sink with running hot and cold water. Hand soap and paper hand towels are provided.

Education Room:

Sharing a building with the toilets in Tarn Hows main car park is an Education Room with interpretation boards and benches (without armrests). The floor of the education room is wooden and the room is large with a high ceiling, so it echoes. The manual-opening entrance doors to the education room are over 2.5 meters wide and open inwards, one of these doors is normally propped open when National Trust staff are present at the site. There is limited natural light in the Education Room, which is lit by LED bulbs. While National Trust staff members are often available in the car park at Tarn Hows to help out with directions and information about the local area, induction loops are not available at Tarn Hows and the current team does not have specialist communication skills.

Phone reception:

There is limited mobile phone reception on the site with the nearest pay phone in Coniston and at Hawkshead hill (off the B5285).

The main circular route around Tarn Hows:

The circular route around the tarn is suitable for pushchairs, prams, buggies, wheelchairs and mobility vehicles. Bicycles are not allowed on the foot paths around the tarn.

The path is signposted with orientation maps near the pedestrian exit of the carpark. Other footpaths and bridleways lead off from the main circular path; the majority of these are not accessible to wheelchair users.

This main path is accessible to wheel chair users, however in places there are short steep ascents and descents, as well as more gradual longer inclines and declines. This walk is 1.6 miles in length,

with 10 (weathered) benches spaced around the tarn and located just before or after steeper sections. The path is a firm gravel surface, but some areas can be muddy in wet weather.

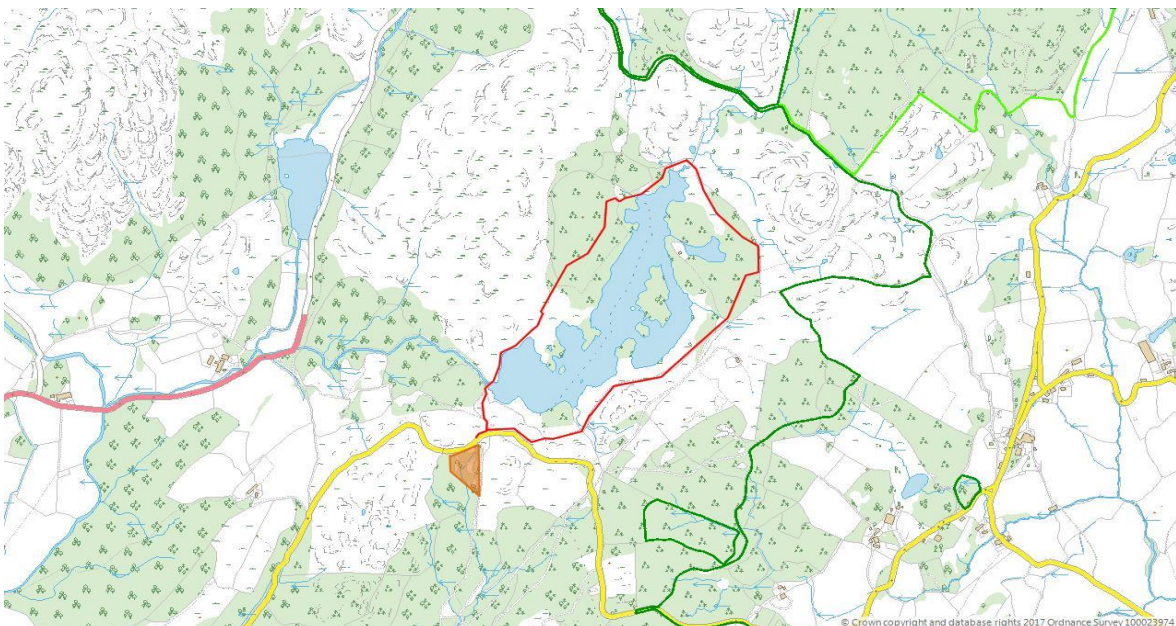
The circular route in detail:

From the car park, exit through the pedestrian exit and cross the road. The path starts a gradual descent to the tarn shore, going through a gate which opens in both directions and crosses the dam of the tarn. For roughly the next 200 meters the path undulates gently before starting a gentle but becoming steeper ascent. The path levels for a short period before starting a steep descent, which levels off and follows the level of the tarn. Passing through a gate and shortly after crossing over a bridge marks the halfway point of this circular path. The path now goes through a wooded section starting a long but gentle incline. At the top of the incline panoramic views towards Conistown Old Man and Wetherlam can be seen. For the remainder of the route the path starts and then continues a very gentle descent with benches again on the left hand side of the path. There are options to make the circular walk slightly longer by taking the path on the right at the fork back down to the tarn shore, or by continuing on the main path and heading left at the fork back to the carpark. After both paths have rejoined take the left path at the fork and cross the road heading back into the carpark.

Benches are spaced out around the Tarn before or after steeper sections.



Firm gravel path surface



Red line showing the accessible path around the tarn. Orange shading showing location of the pay and display carpark.