

Sence Valley Forest Park

Opening Times

Free admission. Car park opens daily from 8.30am till dusk. See signs in car park for closing times.

Parking

The main car park is located inside the site entrance. However, there is a separate surfaced disabled car park in the centre of the site to avoid steep paths downhill. The site entrance has a height restriction barrier of 2.2m. Anyone wishing to enter the site with a larger vehicle should contact the Forestry Commission on 01889 586593 at least 48 hours in advance of a visit.

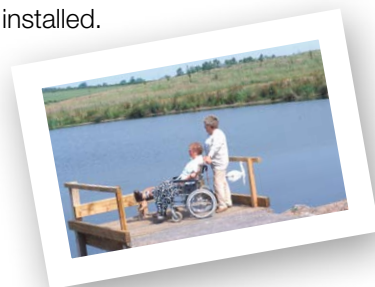
Trails

There is an extensive network of surfaced (compacted gravel) paths and grassy tracks across the site, some of which have steep slopes. The site provides access for pedestrians, wheelchair users, cyclists and horse riders. The different routes can be identified throughout the park by following symbols displayed on posts. An All Ability Access Trail (graded as A2, smooth and gentle) starts and finishes at the lower car park, and follows gravelled tracks around the Horseshoe Lake.

Facilities

Disabled toilets are located on the main car park at the top of the slope. Gateway shelters and information points and boards, installed in 2008, identify the abundant wildlife in the park. Visually impaired visitors can learn more about the site through the audio posts installed.

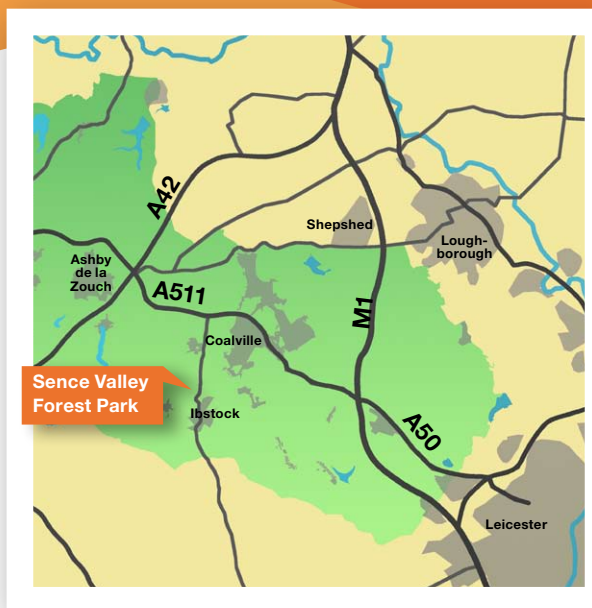
Fishing platforms available for disabled users (by permit only). A bird hide and picnic areas are also available.



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Location

North of Ibstock on the A447.

General Information:

Forestry Commission 01889 586593

www.forestry.gov.uk

Leicestershire County Council 01455 290429

The National Forest Company

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information at the time of printing. However, the National Forest Company cannot be held responsible for any error, omission or subsequent changes.

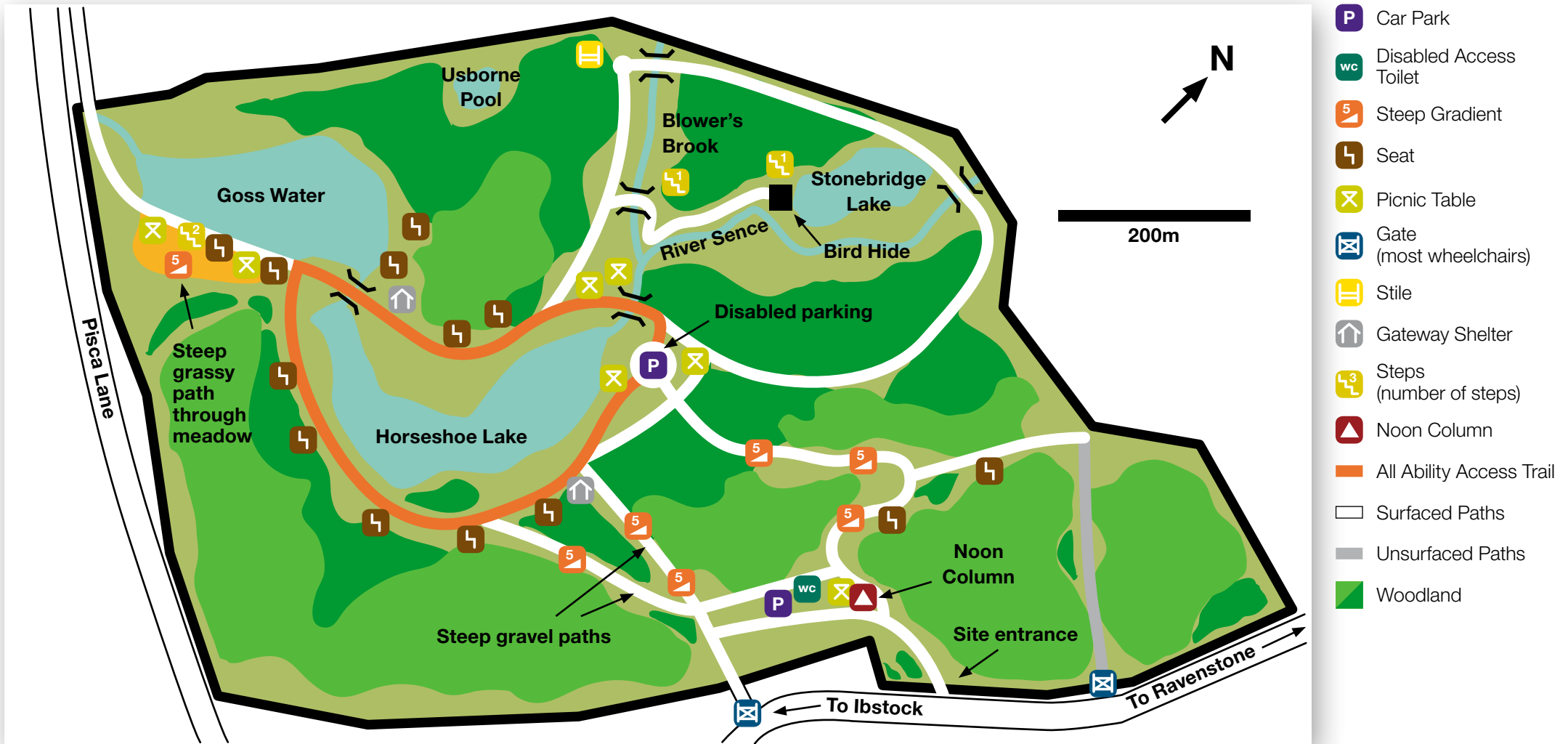
Photography: Christopher Beech and NFC

This guide is available in large print. Call 01283 551211

Sence Valley Forest Park

Access for All





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Sence Valley Forest Park was once part of a large opencast coal mine, covering around 186 hectares (460 acres). Nearly 8 million tons of coal were extracted between 1982 and 1996, when the mine closed. Much of the area was restored to farmland, but 60 hectares (150 acres) were given to Leicestershire County Council for the creation of a Forest Park. More than 98,000 trees were planted in 1998, transforming this section of the Sence Valley into a haven for wildlife and visitors alike. The Forest Park is managed by the Forestry Commission and provides a wonderfully varied mosaic of woodlands, lakes, wildflower meadows and interlinking trails on the edge of Heather and Ibstock.

The Park is now teeming with wildlife, and plays host to a rich variety of bird life; more than 150 bird species have been recorded at the park. An artificial Sand Martin nesting wall was constructed alongside the Horseshoe Lake, and provides nesting sites for Sand Martin's visiting over the summer months. The River Sence is now home to otters, and there are signs of water voles on the river's tributaries. The Forest Park is also a great area for bats, with numerous sightings of Pipistrelle, Daubenton's and Noctule bats. Look out for one of the six Noon Columns that are dotted across The National Forest. Each sculpture is carved with a vertical slot, which aligns with the sun every day at true noon, casting a line of light within its own shadow.