

Take care, be aware

Tips and advice on accessing
our reservoirs



**Scottish
Water**

Trusted to serve Scotland

Everything you need to know about The Land Reform (Scotland) Act and your access rights on Scottish Water's reservoirs.

In welcoming visitors to our reservoirs, Scottish Water have produced this customer information leaflet to offer you some practical tips and advice on how to stay safe and enjoy your visit. We hope that you find it useful. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 creates a right of responsible access to land and water in Scotland. This includes access to reservoirs for water based activities. Scottish Water has many scenic reservoirs and landholdings throughout Scotland and there is a well-established history of these sites being enjoyed for public recreation.



Scottish Outdoor Access Code

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code has been developed by Scottish Natural Heritage and offers guidance on the rights and responsibilities of both the public and land managers such as Scottish Water.

The code is based on three key principles:

1. Respect the interests of other people

Everybody has the right to enjoy the outdoors but it is important to remember that there are many people who live and work outdoors too. Please make sure you respect their privacy, safety and livelihoods.

2. Care for the environment

As our environment contributes greatly to our quality of life, it is important that you care for and respect it. (This is particularly important on drinking water catchments where particular care and attention should be taken to maintain high water quality standards).

3. Take responsibility for your own actions

It is important to remember that the outdoors is not risk-free and people exercising their access rights should do so with care. There are particular hazards associated with the water environment, especially reservoirs. Common hidden dangers are outlined on the next page, and should be fully understood before any water borne activity is undertaken, however this list is by no means complete.

Please remember that you are responsible for your own actions and safety in and around water at all times. This includes the actions of people you are responsible for, such as children, school parties or other dependents. We would also ask you to help us keep our reservoirs clean and tidy by taking your litter home.

Why does Scottish Water store water?

Reservoirs are used by Scottish Water to provide storage for water before it is treated and made safe for you to use and drink. It is a high priority for Scottish Water that the water quality in our reservoirs is maintained at a standard high enough to make it possible to treat. In order to do this, special care must be taken to limit the amount of pollution entering the water environment.

Be aware of hidden dangers

Reservoirs are man made features and because of their purpose, they have a number of unique hidden dangers. These dangers relate mainly to built structures such as dams, spillways (overflows) and water intakes (underwater pipe work that takes water out of the reservoir) and the effects of these. For example; water intakes can cause dangerous down currents, underwater structures could cause you to injure yourself or you could even get stuck in an overflow pipe. For your own safety you should keep away from all man made structures.

Other hidden dangers found at reservoirs are similar to those that can be found at natural lochs and include deep cold water (even on a hot day), underwater plant life and steep banks.



For these reasons and in the interests of our customers' health and safety, Scottish Water does not encourage swimming or diving in any of our reservoirs. You must also be aware that winter sports, such as ice-skating, are also not encouraged on our frozen reservoirs due to the immediate risk of injury and drowning from freezing water.

If you intend to access a reservoir for the first time, you can contact Scottish Water on our Customer Helpline on 0800 0778778, to find out more about the reservoir. However, please remember that it is your own responsibility to decide whether the reservoir is suitable for the activity that you intend to carry out.

Group access

Scottish Water cannot advise you on specific safety information or requirements relating to your particular recreational activity. Group leaders and individual participants are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and make an informed decision as to whether a reservoir is suited to their particular activity.

- **Facilities**

We would encourage groups intending to access any reservoirs in Scotland to contact Scottish Water in advance to make sure that there are appropriate facilities, such as toilets and car parks, to accommodate the expected number of visitors.

- **Hygiene**

We would ask that you ensure your canoe or boat has been thoroughly washed before your visit. Dangerous bacteria and parasites could be transported from one body of water to another, and as a result this could cause pollution of the public water supply and also cause damage to fish stocks.

- **Fishing**

Remember that the water environment is also enjoyed by local fishermen and anglers. If anglers are present at the time of your visit, we would ask you to keep a safe distance and avoid disturbing them.

General restrictions to our reservoirs

1. Vehicles

Access rights to our reservoirs do not apply to motorised vehicles. In the interest of maintaining a good quality water supply to our customers, as well as an enjoyable environment, vehicular access will normally be limited to outwith the boundary of the reservoir.

2. Built structures

Access to built structures such as dams, intake towers and access bridges is also excluded from the access rights. For your own safety, we ask you to respect these restrictions.

In the case of dams, we also need to be extra cautious so as to not damage the ground and land surrounding a dam. As a result, access with vehicles, cycles, etc. will only be permitted where there are suitable roads or pathways already present near the dam.



If you have any comments or concerns during your visit please contact our Customer Helpline on **0800 0778778** and ask to speak to the Access Officer.

Please remember
to be safe and
enjoy your visit!



Keeping up to date and getting in touch

Find out more about Scottish Water, our charges, our customer charter and keep up to date with what we are doing in your area.

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help@scottishwater.co.uk

Call

Free Customer Helpline
(24 hours a day, seven days a week)



0800 0778778

You can view the Scottish Water Access Policy on our website at www.scottishwater.co.uk

More information on the Access Code can be found at www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please call our Customer Helpline.

If you have a disability, medical condition or other reason why you may need additional assistance from Scottish Water, then please contact us and we can add your name, address and requirements to our confidential Priority Services Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.