



# Lake District Calvert Trust - Our Impact



## Setting the scene for this report

The report focuses on the activities delivered by the Trust in a “normal year.” Most of the data used refers to 2019.

Since March 2020, things have been anything but normal as a result of the pandemic and associated lockdown measures. In 2020 our activity levels, as measured by the number of visits by our disabled beneficiaries, were less than a quarter (23%) of the levels in 2019 and this pattern continued into 2021.

However, as a result of an enormous upswelling of support for the Trust and the dedication of our staff, the Trust has

emerged from these difficult two years ready to resume our normal level of activities.

It is important also to note that this Impact Report does not cover the work of **Calvert Reconnections**, our new residential centre for neuro-rehabilitation, which we were finally able to open to our first clients in June 2021. The new Centre provides ground-breaking, world-class Acquired Brain Injury rehabilitation programmes, delivered, uniquely, in the wonderful outdoor environment of the Lake District and builds on our longstanding pedigree.

## A Message from Giles Mounsey-Heysham, Chair of Lake District Calvert Trust.

The purpose of this report is to highlight the Social Impacts which a visit to Lake District Calvert Trust can deliver for people with a disability, profound or mild.

**Our mission** is to enable people with disabilities to achieve their potential through the challenge of adventurous activities in the countryside, in order for them to develop, change perceptions and make positive and lasting changes to their lives. We work with our disabled beneficiaries to encourage them to reach their full potential no matter what their level of ability.

Each year we welcome around 3,500 visitors to our 60 bed Centre near Keswick. Our disabled visitors are able to enjoy the benefits of outdoor activities in a safe and accessible, yet challenging environment. We employ over 60 staff. Many are specialist instructors who help our guests to canoe and sail, climb and abseil, swim and master our high ropes course. One of

our most popular activities takes place at Calvert Stables, where we offer riding and trap driving for disabled visitors as well as to the local Riding for the Disabled Association.

We know that people with disabilities have been impacted disproportionately by the pandemic, with higher levels of anxiety as well as physical and mental health issues. It is abundantly clear that the Calvert “experience” and its benefits are needed now, more than ever. We are able to deliver significant and life-enhancing benefits to our visitors, even after just a short visit. The Calvert Lakes website [www.calvertlakes.org.uk](http://www.calvertlakes.org.uk) shows many examples of our activities and the real-life benefits experienced by our visitors.

I hope this report will pique your interest – most particularly in the benefits that, together, we can and must provide for our disabled visitors.

# Lake District Calvert Trust - Our Impact

## Summary of what the Trust does: the Lake District Calvert Experience

For over 40 years, the Trust has been welcoming guests with disabilities to our specialist centre, to enjoy the benefits of outdoor activities in a safe and accessible, yet challenging environment.

Set in a stunning location overlooking Bassenthwaite Lake near Keswick in the Lake District, since 1978 we have utilised the Lake District environment as well as our own stables and boathouse at separate nearby locations to deliver pioneering accessible adventure.



We provide residential visits lasting from 3 to 7 nights. During each visit we deliver a wide range of activities that are always carried out in groups. The activities are planned carefully to be tailored to group and individual needs. All our groups are led by our experienced and specialised instructors.

Groups consist of disabled beneficiaries, their carers and family members. All are encouraged to join in the activities. We work with our beneficiaries to encourage them to reach their full potential no matter what their level of ability. The residential stays also provide socialising opportunities.

## Our activities....

- Wheelchair Challenge Course
- Hand Biking & Cycling
- Lakeland Walk & Push
- Ghyll Scrambling
- High Ropes Course
- Zip Wire
- Trapeze & Swing
- Rock & Rope
- Bushcraft
- Orienteering
- Swimming
- Horse Riding
- Trap Driving
- Canoeing
- Sailing
- Catamaran Sailing
- Bunkhouse Visits



# The Lake District Calvert Trust in headline numbers

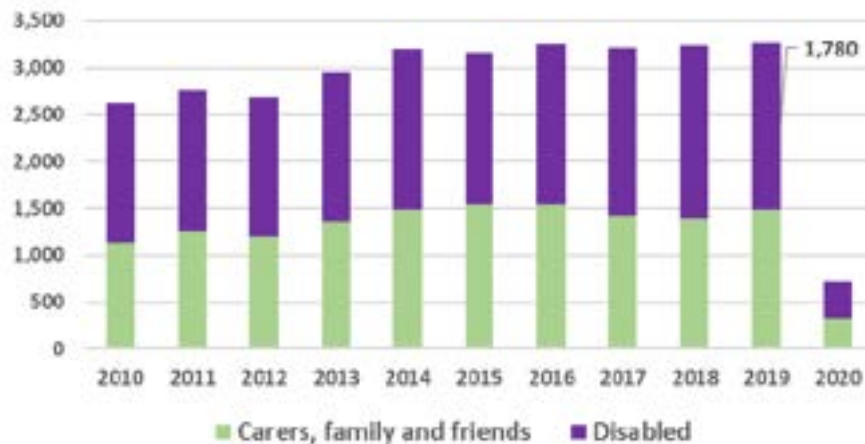
## The Trust's beneficiaries, last 10 years

In 2019, prior to the pandemic, we welcomed around 3,600 visitors to our Calvert Lakes centre including 1,800 disabled beneficiaries and their carers, family, and friends. These users spent around 12,200 bed nights in total in the Lake District.

Over the 10 years up to and including 2019, we welcomed in total around 16,500 disabled beneficiaries who have benefitted from a programme of bespoke activities.



The Trust's beneficiaries, last 10 years

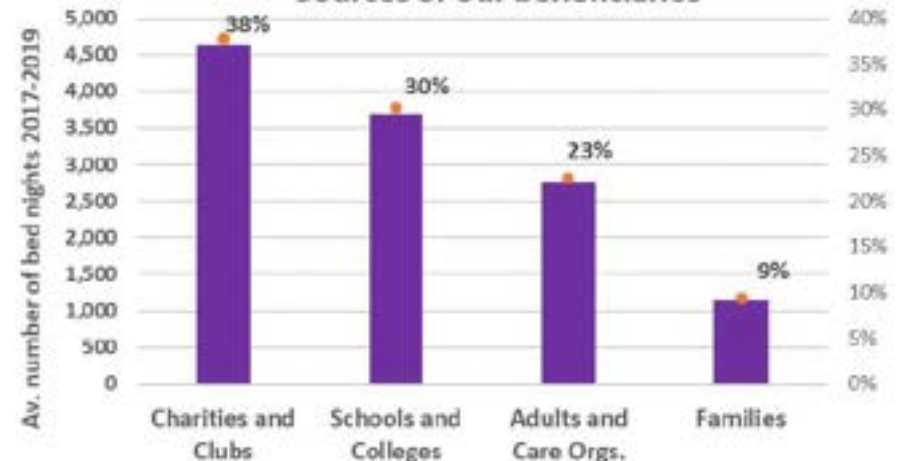


## Sources of our beneficiaries

Our visitors and beneficiaries come from three main groups:

- School/college groups: primarily but not exclusively from Special Educational Needs (SEN) schools. In 2019, 41 different schools or colleges used our facilities.
- Disability groups: catering for specific disabilities or disabilities across a local area – clubs, care organisations and charities. In 2019, 88 different disability groups used our facilities.
- Families and groups of individual visitors.

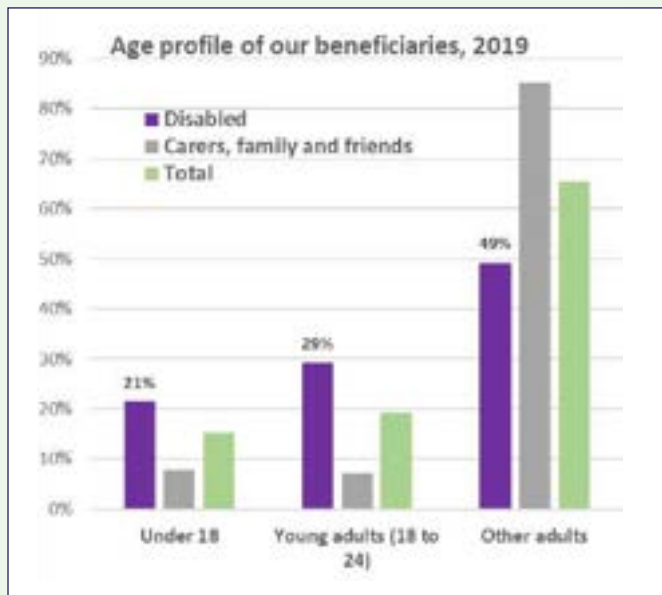
Sources of our beneficiaries



# Who are our beneficiaries?

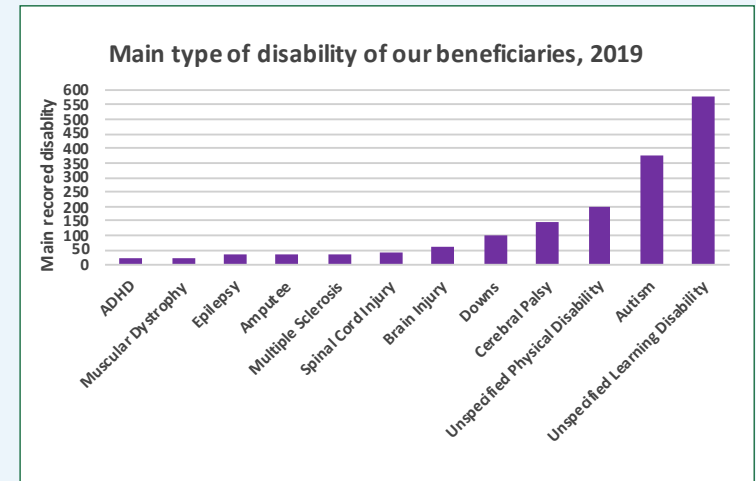
## Age profile of our beneficiaries, 2019

- Every year for the five years to 2019 the Trust has welcomed around 3,200 beneficiaries to use our extensive facilities. Of these around 1,750 (54%) were disabled beneficiaries and 1,500 were non-disabled visitors coming as teachers, carers or family members.
- Around 20% of our disabled beneficiaries are children under 18 (c. 400 in 2019) and 30% are young adults (c. 500).



## Main types of disability of our beneficiaries, 2019

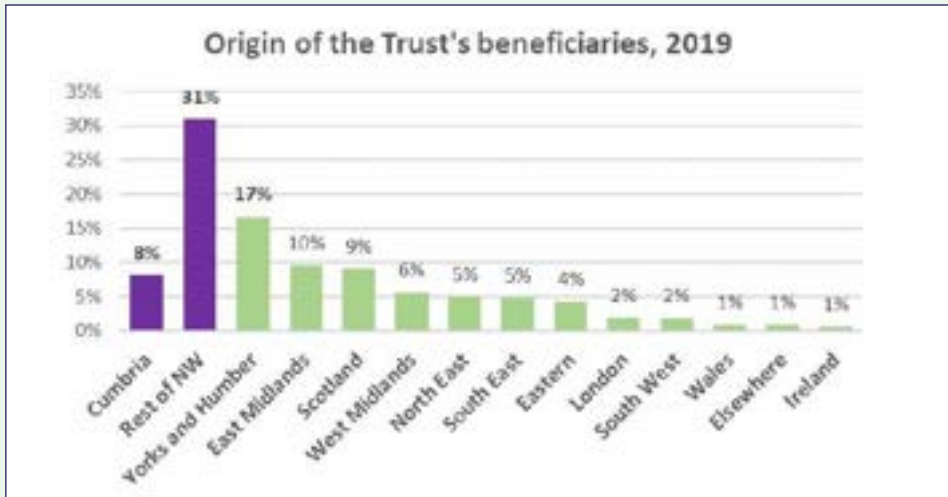
- The Trust caters for an enormous range and type of disability amongst our beneficiaries, covering: physical impairments, learning difficulties, cognitive differences, sensory impairments and mental health difficulties.
- Many beneficiaries are profoundly disabled and may have multiple or complex needs.



# Who are our beneficiaries?

## Origin of the Trust's beneficiaries, 2019

Our beneficiaries come from across the UK. The majority (60%) come from the north of England including here in Cumbria, whilst nearly 30% come from the south of England and the Midlands.



## Supporting the local community...

The Trust's residential centre, Calvert Lakes, is located just 3.5 miles from Keswick and 10 miles from Cockermouth in West Cumbria. Its facilities are open and used by our local community, predominantly people with family members who have disabilities.

**Our 12m x 6m multi-sensory hydrotherapy pool** is well-used by the local disabled community.

In 2019 the service was greatly in demand and was used by the local community for over 12,000 individual hydrotherapy pool sessions.

**Our Calvert stables facility** enabled us to deliver around 1,000 sessions for disabled riders from the local community and a further 900 sessions involving our pony club and community riders.



# What happens to our beneficiaries when they are here and how we change lives

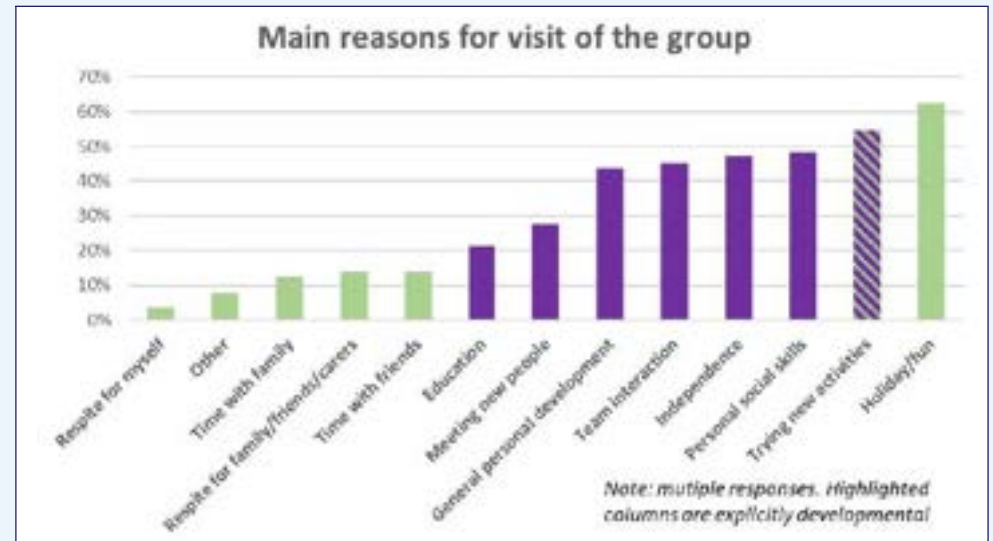
## Main Reasons for visit of the group

Groups come to visit the Trust for a variety of reasons.

In part the reasons are **developmental** for the young people and adults with disabilities: to encourage independence and to develop social and personal skills.

For all our beneficiaries the stay at the Trust's facilities is also **fun and enjoyable**: acting as a real holiday and reward. For families and carers, the visit also provides important respite support and a chance to spend valuable time with their loved ones.

The vast majority of groups who visit the Trust report that they have **achieved in full the purposes of the visit**. Some of the reasons they record are summarised opposite.



The Trust gets a very high level of repeat visits from all types of users – schools, charity groups and families alike – a testament to the quality of the experience we offer. In 2019, all groups planned to return to Calvert Lakes with around two thirds planning (pre-pandemic) to return within a year.



# What difference do residential outdoor visits make? Evidence from wider research

There is a large and growing body of literature on the impact of outdoor activities on young people and adults. This research focusses on both the benefits of outdoor learning or education and the benefits of the residential experience.

There are well-evidenced benefits from **residential** trips and of being moved to a different environment from normal home or school life. The residential experiences and the activities can make an important contribution towards the social life and development of participants:

## Some benefits of residential visits and relevance to our beneficiaries

### Directly relevant to most beneficiaries

**Resilience, self-confidence and wellbeing:** can significantly improve students' resilience, self-confidence, and sense of wellbeing.

**Relationships:** can foster deeper student-teacher/adult, student-student and student-carer relationships that can be sustained back in schools or home and result in improved learner engagement and progress/achievement.

**Cohesion:** can significantly boost cohesion, interpersonal relationships and a sense of belonging across schools/ communities.

*Source: Learning Away, (2015)*

### Potential benefits for some beneficiaries

**Engagement with learning:** can significantly improve students' engagement with their learning, leading to improved school attendance and behaviour.

**Achievement:** can boost attainment in SATs and other exams.

**Knowledge, skills and understanding:** can be significantly improved.

Research shows that access to **engagement with the outdoors** delivers other benefits (that to some degree overlap with the benefits from residential). The evidence from outdoor education and learning is that:

- The experience of trying new things and being challenged builds confidence and helps develop new skills and behaviours whilst participating.
- Back at home and school/college, after the outdoor experience, these new skills help make participants more focused and better able to cope with challenges
- Participants are then more engaged in their learning, have higher aspirations and are better prepared for employment.
- There is a stronger appreciation of the natural environment and the outdoors.





# Lake District Calvert Trust's Theory of Change

## Context

Our participants have a **wide range of disabilities**, physical, sensory and learning. Many are profoundly disabled.

They come in groups for a **residential experience** that lasts 3 to 7 days.

They often **lack confidence, self-esteem and communication and social skills**.

The visits are often the first time a group has been together in this way.

The visits have a **critical development** role for beneficiaries.

The visits also provide a form of holiday and a respite for carers.

## Our Interventions

### What happens

Participants carry out a wide range of **outdoor and indoor activities** in groups: climbing, horse and trap riding, sailing, zip-wires, ghyll scrambling, walking, bush craft and swimming.

The activities are delivered by **experienced instructors**. They are designed to provide a structured experience and are **tailored** to the individuals and groups. The experiences are designed to **challenge, test and stretch** participants.

All participants **socialise** in the residential accommodation during the evening with the group and others.

The **teachers, carers** and family members of participants are involved in the activities.

## What this achieves

### On the visit and afterwards

Improved **confidence, resilience, self-belief** and **awareness** of capabilities.

**New interests** and awareness of other **opportunities** and **possibilities**.

Improved **social skills** and new **relationships** with students, teachers/ carers and others.

Changed **perceptions** by teachers/ carers of capabilities.

Respite for family and carers.

*Also leads to greater appreciation of the outdoors and the environment.*

### Long term impact

*Improved capability for independent living.*

*Improved physical and mental health.*

*Improved educational (and employment) outcomes.*

### Long term impact

*People with disabilities and their families enjoy **happier, healthier and more fulfilling** lives.*

# What difference does a visit to the Trust make?

Our regular visitor feedback surveys confirm that our programmes do **deliver successfully** in achieving the outcomes sought: especially around greater independence, personal skills, and social skills. We can be confident that:

- Over the last 10 years, our 16,500 disabled beneficiaries have seen a range of improvements in their personal and social skills as a result of visiting Calvert Lakes. This will improve their ability to deal with situations, have coping strategies and be motivated to develop new skills, try new things and be more independent. In the longer run this should help our beneficiaries lead more independent lives, find work and/or education and learning opportunities.

- For every disabled beneficiary who visits us, we host roughly one family member or carer/ teacher. The experience of coming to Calvert Lakes provides important respite to families and carers. More importantly, it is a chance to see their disabled family member, pupil or person cared for, try new things. As we know from the research, residential settings tend to foster, deepen and improve these relationships.
- Finally, society as a whole benefits from the activities of the Trust. In the longer term, many of our beneficiaries will have lesser demands on the health and social care sector and be better able to find work and contribute to society in other ways.



As well as the general challenges faced by young people benefitting from outdoor education and learning, our disabled beneficiaries have a further sets of needs and challenges that we help address:

- Child and adolescent beneficiaries with disabilities often experience a narrower range of recreational activities, which are organised for them and few with a social focus. Beneficiaries are often excluded from social activities and are perceived as dependent and lacking in competence.
- Beneficiaries often have impaired anatomical, physiological and functional characteristics with associated negative coping strategies. They have the mental stress of coping with a disability. The inability to carry out normal functions impacts on self-identity and self-esteem for the individuals.

We know that key reasons for coming to Trust are to address many of these issues:

- The **shared experiences** of the activities provide openings for interactions with others,

especially when the activities involved teamwork or the interdependence of beneficiaries.

- The **shared time** in the residential setting provides additional social opportunities and these positive social experiences have led to the establishment of friendships and support networks for many beneficiaries.
- Increased **independence** is a key outcome for the beneficiaries of our programmes. This has the potential to make a notable difference to their lives, those close to them and to wider society through reducing the need for assistance in several situations.
- An increase in **confidence** is also an important benefit of attending our programmes. This impacts on beneficiaries' lives through their willingness to try new things and the ability to achieve things they did not think were possible. This provides beneficiaries with the motivation to do or achieve more, as well as improved attitudes towards social relationships, school-work or paid employment.

## PIMIS's 'Calvert Experience'

The Physical Impairment / Medical Inclusion Service offers individual and statutory specialist support and advice to pupils, schools, and families. Their aim is to enable all pupils with physical impairments and /or medical conditions to access their educational environment alongside their peers, promoting greater understanding of individual pupil needs and helping to break down barriers promoting inclusion. With the support of bursary funding, they brought a group of 18 to Calvert Lakes in October 2019. This is the feedback we received from their Head of Service, Kim Fisher:

***"The Calvert Trust is a very special place. The centre is fully inclusive for all disabilities, and all the staff are wonderful. Mainstream children, especially with mild physical needs struggle to find an identity in a disabled world or non-disabled world. Mainstream is about inclusion and taking part in everything alongside their peers. However, there are times when they want to be with and compete with others with disabilities. These children find it difficult to use wheelchairs or to accept help but in a centre such as Calvert they learn that it is ok. Our complex children do things they never thought possible and the staff at the centre are determined that everyone will have a go at each activity despite their limitations. It inspires the children with a real can do and positive attitude which I think goes through life with them. I have pupils now in their 20s who came to Calvert on our first visit, and they still talk about it now."***



## Oliver's 'Calvert Experience'

Oliver Voysey has been a regular visitor to Calvert Lakes with his sister Elizabeth, mum Sarah and dad Gary since 2017. Their amazing 'Oliver's Calvert Army' crowdfunding campaign raised over £248,000 for the Trust's Bounce Back Appeal during 2021. His mum Sarah explains the impact his visits have had:

*"13 years ago, Oliver suffered a brain injury when he was two days old. He survived but was left with catastrophic damage which caused sight loss (he's registered blind), cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and learning difficulties. He needs specialist care daily and lots of additional support.*

*For 13 years we've fought to show him that anything is possible, and that we will do all we can to help him rehabilitate. The Lake District Calvert Trust have helped us to do this.*

***They really do make disability just a word. They've given Oliver experiences we didn't think were achievable. His confidence has soared doing canoeing, abseiling, rock climbing, cycling, ghyll scrambling, sailing, assault courses, horse riding and fell climbing. Nothing is impossible at Calvert!***

*The psychological impact this has had has been amazing. We've seen Oliver go from strength to strength and he lives by the motto 'never say I can't'."*





Challenging Disability Through Outdoor Adventure

**The Lake District Calvert Trust's inspirational work with children and adults with disabilities is only possible thanks to the generous support we receive from our partners and donors.**

For more information, please call **017687 72255**  
or email **enquiries@calvertlakes.org.uk**

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