

# Bradbourne Lakes Visitor Information Pack

## Welcome to Bradbourne Lakes

This information pack has been designed to help all visitors plan their visit to Bradbourne Lakes. Everyone experiences outdoor spaces differently, and we want you to have the information you need to decide whether Bradbourne Lakes is the right place for you and to feel prepared before you arrive.

This guide provides clear information about what to expect, including access, sounds, sights, facilities, quieter areas, and sensory experiences.

The park is free to enter. Please note that food and drinks is not available for purchase in the park. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own refreshments and drinking water. Free parking is available near the park.

Virtual Tour TBC

Printable resources TBC

## About Bradbourne Lakes

Bradbourne Lakes is a public park in Sevenoaks, Kent. The park consists of a series of freshwater lakes, wildlife habitats, walking routes, play spaces, bridges, seating areas, and natural landscapes. It measures approximately 350m long x 100m wide, covers 3.5 hectares, and is severed nearly in half by Betenson Avenue.



Map of the park

The park is divided into two sections:

### **Northern Park**

- Access from Bradbourne Vale Road and Betenson Avenue
- Includes bridge over water
- Has a main walking route running north to south
- Northern side of the park is quieter, more natural
- The stream is accessible for pond dipping



Entrance to north side - winter

### **Southern Park**

- Access from Lambarde Road and Betenson Avenue
- Contains larger circular walking routes around the lakes
- Includes bridges, seating areas, wildlife viewing opportunities
- Busier than the Northern side of the park



Entrance to the park, south side - winter

## Before You Visit

Many neurodivergent people find it helpful to know what to expect before arriving.



Community area – south side, summer

### Best times for a quieter visit

The park is usually quieter:

- Early mornings
- Weekday mornings
- Outside school holidays
- During cooler or wetter weather

The park may be busier:

- Weekends
- School holidays
- Sunny afternoons
- Community event days



View from Lambarde Road – south Side, winter

## Getting Here

### By Car

Parking is available:

- Near the Betenson Avenue entrance (time limits may apply)
- Near the Lambarde Road entrance (time limits may apply)
- In the surrounding streets – free

Accessible parking provision is being developed as part of the park improvement programme (expected to be implemented 2027).

### By Bus

Bus services operate along Bradbourne Vale Road near the northern entrance to the park.

### Arriving at the Park

When you arrive, you will find:

- Public footpaths
- Open green spaces
- Lakes and ponds

- Trees and planting
- Wildlife habitats
- Information signs
- Seating areas

There are simple wooden gates to all entrances, accessible for wheelchair users.

## What You Will See

Visitors may encounter:

### Natural Features

- Lakes
- Ducks, geese and other water birds
- Fish and aquatic life
- Trees and woodland planting
- Wildflowers and grassland



Bridge across the stream – north side, summer

### Park Features

- Walking paths
- Open areas
- Feature trees
- Bridges
- Druid monolith
- Picnic areas
- Seating



Seating at Lake 2, south side, winter

## Sensory Information

Every person experiences sensory environments differently. The following information may help you prepare.

### Sounds

You may hear:

- Birds singing
- Ducks and geese calling
- Wind in trees
- Water moving
- Children playing
- Dogs barking
- Conversations from other visitors
- Traffic noise near main roads

The sound levels are generally lower away from entrances, roads and play areas. Note that during the events it could get much noisier in the open community areas of the park.



Entrance gates from Lambarde Road – south side, summer

### Smells

You may notice:

- Fresh grass
- Flowers
- Wet soil
- Woodland scents
- Lake water

Some planting areas may contain scented plants. These are intended as optional sensory experiences rather than features everyone must pass through.



Feature Black Walnut tree – north side, winter

### Sights

The park includes:

- Reflections on water
- Birds and wildlife
- Seasonal flowers
- Green open spaces
- Trees and woodland areas

In sunny weather, water surfaces can reflect bright light.



Tranquil Lake 2, south side - winter

You may wish to bring:

- Sunglasses
- A hat
- A sunscreen
- Any preferred visual aids

### **Touch and Movement**

The park contains different walking surfaces.

These may include:

- Smooth tarmac paths
- Gravel paths
- Bridges
- Grass edges

Some surfaces may feel different underfoot. Some of the footpaths have protruding tree roots.



The Boating Lake (Lake 4), south side, winter

### **What Wildlife Might I See?**

Bradbourne Lakes is an important habitat for wildlife and many visitors enjoy watching birds and other animals during their visit.

You may see:

- Herons standing quietly at the water's edge
- Smaller white egrets feeding around the lakes
- Ducks swimming on the water
- Canada geese and other waterfowl
- Fish and aquatic wildlife
- Dragonflies and other insects during warmer months
- Seasonal wild birds in the trees and around the lakes

Wildlife can sometimes be unpredictable. Birds may suddenly take flight, flap their wings, or make loud calls.

If you enjoy watching wildlife, there are several locations around the lakes where you can stop and observe nature at your own pace.



Goslings at Lake 4, south side – spring

## Feeding the Ducks

A duck feeder is available in the South Park.

Things to know:

- The duck feeder only accepts card payments
- Feeding ducks can be a fun and engaging activity for visitors of all ages
- Birds may gather around the feeder when food is dispensed
- This area may occasionally be busier than other parts of the park, particularly during weekends and school holidays

If you prefer quieter spaces, you may wish to visit the feeder during less busy times or enjoy observing the birds from a nearby bench.



Duck feeder at Lake 4, south side, winter

## Points of Interest Around Bradbourne Lakes

There are several interesting features to discover as you explore the park. These can provide useful landmarks and destinations when planning your route.

### Duck Feeder – South Park

### Second largest London Plane tree in Sevenoaks – North Park

### Druid Monolith

The Druid Monolith is a distinctive landmark within the park and can be used as a useful meeting point or navigation marker. Many visitors enjoy stopping here to learn about the site's history and character.

## Weirs

The park contains several weirs which help manage water flow between the lakes.

What to expect:

- The sound of flowing water
- Movement and splashing water, particularly after rainfall
- Opportunities to observe wildlife around the water

Some visitors find the sound of running water calming and relaxing.

## Sluices

Historic sluices can be seen throughout the park. These structures control water levels within the lake system and form part of the heritage and engineering interest of Bradbourne Lakes.

## Bridges

A number of bridges connect different areas of the park.

Some bridges may feel narrower than the main paths and may be not used by people travelling in both directions.



Geese in the lakes

## Quieter Areas

The park improvement will keep the character of the North side as calm and quieter space away from more active areas. These spaces are intended to support visitors who prefer lower levels of sensory stimulation.

Quieter areas around Lake 5 are generally:

- Away from play equipment
- Away from busy entrances
- Near planting and wildlife areas
- Suitable for sitting, observing nature or taking a break

## Water Safety

The park contains multiple lakes and open water.

You may see:

- Lake edges
- Viewing points
- Bridges

If open water causes anxiety or discomfort, consider planning a route that stays on the main paths and avoids waterside viewing points.

## Seating and Rest Areas

Seating is available throughout the park.

Many benches are positioned to provide:

- Lake views
- Wildlife viewing opportunities
- Places to rest during a walk

Please note that currently there are no toilets in the park – this is planned to be installed in 2027.



Picnic bench at Lake 4 – south side, winter

## **Helpful Things to Bring**

You may find it useful to bring:

- Water
- Weather-appropriate clothing
- Headphones or ear defenders
- Sunglasses
- Sun hat
- Sensory comfort items
- Mobile phone
- Any medication you may need

## **If You Need a Break**

If you feel overwhelmed, it often helps to:

1. Move to a quieter area
2. Sit on a bench
3. Take deep breaths
4. Spend time observing wildlife or water
5. Leave the park and return another day if needed

There is no expectation to complete a route or stay for a particular length of time.

## **Respecting Everyone's Visit**

Bradbourne Lakes is a shared public space used by:

- Families
- Dog walkers
- People who exercise
- Nature enthusiasts
- Local residents
- Volunteers
- Disabled and non-disabled visitors

Everyone experiences the park differently, and all visitors are welcome.



Busy area in the South side open space – winter

## Contact and Further Information

Before travelling, visitors may wish to check:

- Park opening information
- Planned events
- Accessibility updates
- Toilet availability
- Parking information
- Route maps

Providing clear and factual accessibility information before a visit is a key recommendation of the Sensory Trust accessibility review.

### **We hope you enjoy your visit to Bradbourne Lakes**

Take your time, explore at your own pace, and enjoy the lakes, wildlife, and natural spaces in a way that works best for you.

This publication can be explained in other languages by calling 01732 227000.