



Our impact in 2025



About us

The Lake District Calvert Trust makes adventure accessible for people with disabilities through activities like climbing, canoeing, horse riding and high ropes. We don't remove challenges; we adapt them so everyone can experience the thrill of overcoming them.

Every day, our experienced team build confidence, encourage independence and improve wellbeing. We support everyone, including those with a wide range of complex needs, to achieve things they never thought possible.

The impact of what we do lasts beyond a visit, helping people grow in ambition, self-esteem and connection.

At Calvert, we focus on what you can do. And with 50 years under our belt, we're very good at what we do!

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"It's hard to explain to others but I will give it a try. Our daughter... has severe and profound physical and learning difficulties, and the general public and many workers, see her chair or lack of communication first and foremost. However, the staff at Calvert look at her as a dare devil teenager and see the person not the disability and that is so refreshing."



A story about Calvert by Tom



My name is Tom, and I've been visiting Calvert Lakes since 2012. Since then, I've returned twice a year with my friends. These trips have become a cherished tradition for us, filled with fun, laughter, and unforgettable memories

What I love most about Calvert Lakes is the wonderful sense of community. Being surrounded by friends, the dedicated staff and volunteers, and the supportive team from Calvert makes every visit feel special. The evenings are spent in the games room, sharing stories and relaxing after a full day of exciting activities. Whether it's trying something new or enjoying familiar favourites, every activity is enhanced by the group spirit – friends, carers and parents all together.

The staff and volunteers at Calvert Lakes are truly exceptional. They look after us with genuine care, and the kitchen staff always serve up delicious meals that make us feel right at home. It's this welcoming atmosphere and the connections we've made that keep me coming back year after year

Thank you for reading my story about Calvert Lakes. I hope it captures just how much this place means to me.



“What I love most about Calvert Lakes is the wonderful sense of community.”



Heading for a milestone year

Each year, our impact report reflects on our achievements over the past 12 months. While these pages focus on 2025, we're also celebrating a major milestone – 50 years of accessible adventures at the Lake District Calvert Trust.

Back in 1976, the Fryer-Spedding family began with a simple vision: that people with disabilities should have the same opportunities as anyone else to experience outdoor adventures in the Lake District. Starting with just two ponies and two dinghies, they set out to make that dream a reality.

Today, 50 years later, that ambition still drives everything we do. We now welcome thousands of people each year, leading the way in inclusive adventure and challenging perceptions of disability every day.

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“We embraced every challenge, pushed our boundaries, and proved with the right support, every ability has potential.”

“The whole week has definitely inspired us as a family to be more adventurous and feel like the great outdoors isn't so off limits now with the access needs we are used to living with.”

What's next for The Lake District Calvert Trust

Everything we've learned over the last half century shapes what comes next. We're building towards the next 50 years with a clear plan for the future. Our new 5-year strategy (2026–2030) sets out how we'll grow our impact, reach more people, and continue to lead the way in accessible and inclusive adventure.

In the near future you'll see us...

- 1. Enhance our residential offer at Calvert Lakes** by upgrading facilities, expanding access for under-represented communities, and strengthening our leadership in accessible adventure.
- 2. Develop and expand our community services** by improving provision at Calvert Stables, increasing access to our hydrotherapy pool, and working with partners to grow local SEND opportunities.
- 3. Strengthen and diversify our fundraising** to increase income, expand bursary support, and invest in the systems and relationships needed for long-term stability.
- 4. Invest in our people** by supporting our exceptional staff and volunteers through training and development, improved facilities, positioning us as a centre of excellence.
- 5. Build a resilient and sustainable organisation** by advancing towards net zero, strengthening digital and governance systems, and better reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve.

Our expertise

The Calvert Lakes Adaptive Challenge Model

For over 50 years, the Lake District Calvert Trust has led inclusive outdoor learning for children and young people with disabilities. Through our experience we've developed the Calvert Lakes Adaptive Challenge Model – a practical approach that redefines inclusion in real-life settings.

At the core is a simple but powerful premise – true inclusion is not about reducing challenge, but about adapting how it is accessed.

This ensures that every learner, regardless of ability, can experience challenge, achievement, and a genuine sense of belonging. Using a clear six-step process, we design experiences that remove barriers, adapt access and create meaningful success. The focus is on building confidence, independence, communication and resilience through real experiences.

Crucially, this approach maintains high expectations for all learners, while providing tailored support through adjustments to environment, communication, task design, and support systems.

This means participants are not limited by their needs but empowered to succeed on their own terms.

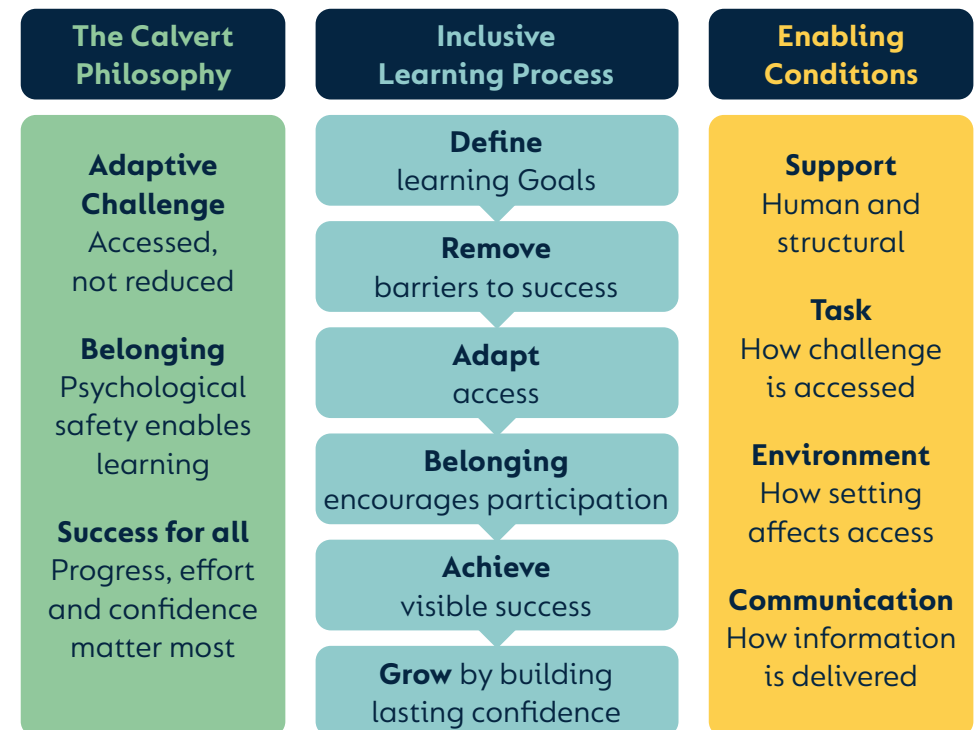
We're not only delivering life-changing experiences, we're shaping best practice in inclusive education.

The Calvert Lakes Adaptive Challenge Model

Our practical framework for inclusive outdoor learning is built around challenge, belonging and success for all learners. Whilst this model has been created for children, we apply our strategy to people of all ages and abilities to ensure everyone can experience achievement.

Core Principle

True inclusion is not about reducing challenge – it is achieved by adapting how it is accessed. Learners should all be about to experience challenge, success and belonging.



Long Term Outcome: • Challenge • Success • Confidence • Growth

Our impact in 2025 – a year in numbers

We had a great 2025 with more than 15,000 visits to our centre across residential breaks, day activities, stables sessions and visits to our hydrotherapy pool.

3,163

Guests stayed for a residential adventure break

2,816

Visits to our stables

308

Guests took part in a one-day adventure

8,897

Sessions in our hydrotherapy pool

56%

Of our residential guests have a disability

44%

Are friends, family, peers or carers

The guests we welcome are as unique as we are!
Of our guests with disabilities...

36%

Have a complex disability*

21%

Have autism or neurodiversity

16%

Have intellectual/learning/memory impairment

15%

Have a physical impairment

5%

Have a long-term health condition

2%

Have a sensory impairment

2%

Have a genetic condition

4%

Have another disability or prefer not to disclose

😊 Importantly here's what our visitors say...

89%

Said activities improved self-confidence

98%

Rated our activities as excellent or good

99%

Rated our team as excellent or good

96%

Would visit us again

*more than one disability

Where do our visitors come from?

We're well recognised here in Cumbria with many of our pool users and stables visitors local to our area.

However, we're also a nationally recognised name in the disability community for our unique residential experiences.

Our residential visitors come from right across the UK

- **45%** Northwest
- **20%** Northeast
- **15%** Midlands
- **8%** Scotland
- **6%** South of England
- **1%** Wales
- **1%** London
- **4%** Other [NI, Isle of Man, other]

We also cater to all ages:

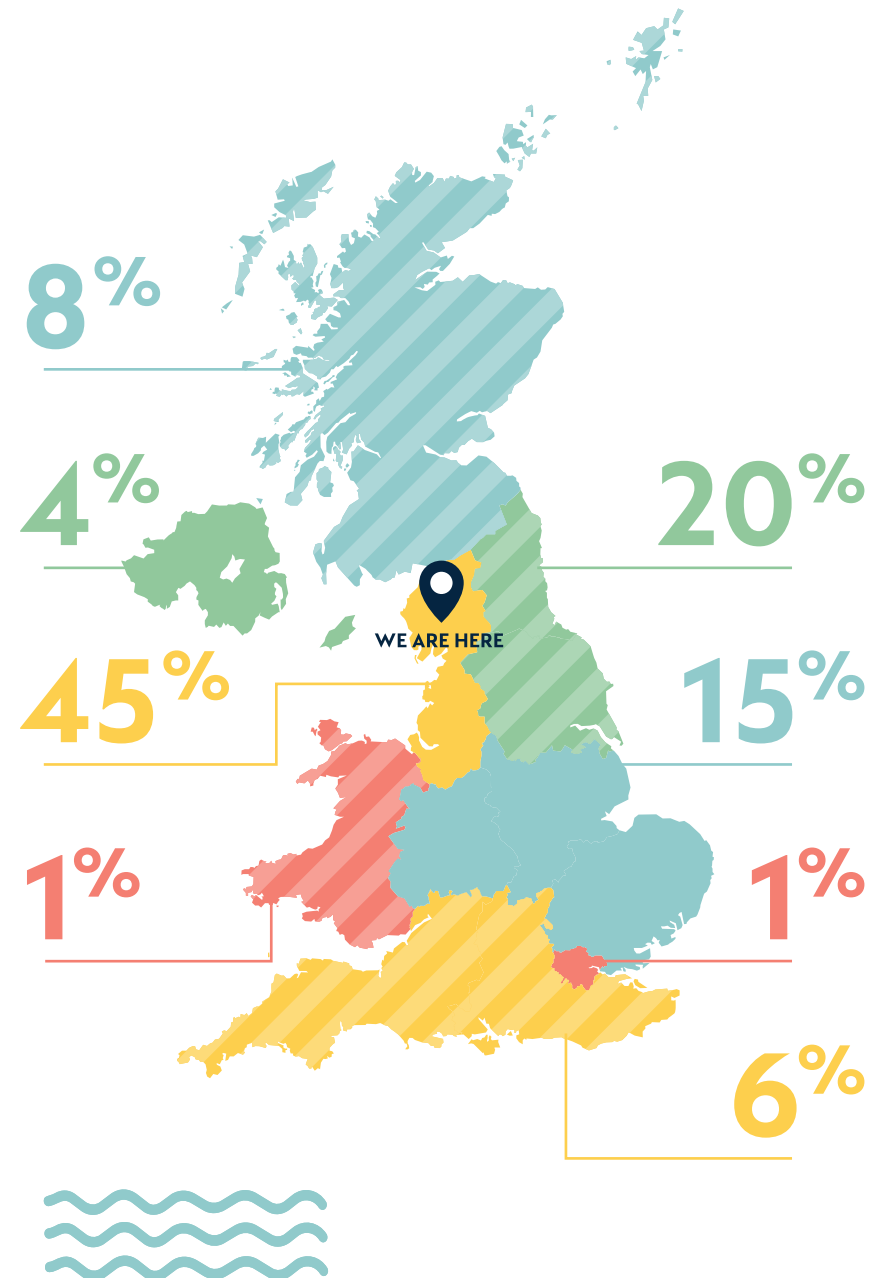
37% under 18

13% 18-25 years old

50% 25 years+

Alongside these numbers, we consistently see the same outcomes from our work:

- Increased confidence to try new things
- Greater independence and decision-making
- Improved communication and social connection
- Better physical activity and wellbeing
- A stronger sense of belonging



What makes us unique



Our people

Our people are at the heart of what makes us unique. Their expertise, passion and creativity ensure our guests' experiences are unforgettable. They work tirelessly to create a warm and supportive environment where every individual can achieve more than they ever thought possible.



Our place

We're based in the Lake District, surrounded by some of the UK's most stunning and challenging landscapes. This isn't a controlled or artificial environment – it's real adventure. Our fully accessible residential centre combines purpose-built facilities and specialist equipment with direct access to both hills and water. That means people don't just take part in activities; they experience the same sense of challenge, freedom and achievement that the outdoors offers everyone.



Our supporters

Our supporters make our work possible, providing vital funding that removes financial barriers and enables more people with disabilities to access life-changing adventures.



Our guests

Our guests inspire everything we do. They bring determination, diversity and a willingness to challenge perceptions, as they discover new abilities, build confidence and redefine what's possible in their lives.



“Your team’s professionalism, warmth, and dedication have clearly made a lasting impression on everyone. Our learners felt supported, encouraged, and inspired throughout their stay, and it was wonderful to see their confidence grow as they took part in the activities.”

“I’ve learned I’m unstoppable here!”

[Click here for more details >>](#)

Why we do what we do

The Lake District Calvert Trust exists because everyone deserves the chance to experience challenge, belonging and achievement – regardless of their ability.

Outdoor adventures offer the opportunity to grow in confidence, resilience, independence and wellbeing in ways everyday environments often cannot. Yet many activity centres are not equipped to make these experiences accessible for people with disabilities. In the UK, 65% of children with disabilities do not meet recommended activity levels, while 79% of people with disabilities say their impairment prevents them from being as active as they would like.

At Calvert Lakes, we combine specialist facilities, adaptive equipment, expert staff and our Adaptive Challenge Model to ensure people of all ages and abilities can take part safely, meaningfully and without barriers.

For many young people, residential outdoor learning is a recognised part of their education – in Scotland, it is now an entitlement for all pupils! But for many people with disabilities, access is still far from guaranteed. Through our work, we see the difference these experiences make every day: people leave more confident, more independent, and more willing to take on challenges they once thought were out of reach.

Did you know?

Research by the University of Cumbria found that the profound and transformative impact that residential experiences and educational visits can have on pupils was significantly greater for vulnerable pupils. We are now proudly working with them to better understand the impact of access to ‘blue and green spaces’ on the lives of people with disabilities.

We do what we do to break down barriers that often exclude people with disabilities from adventurous and confidence-building experiences.



“The full service provided, from the staff, the activities and the amenities were exemplary. We are particularly grateful for the bursary you were able to offer, without which, it would have been extremely difficult to raise the necessary funds to attend.”

“I now am absolutely convinced that it’s not my daughter’s conditions that prevent her taking part in activities it’s the opportunity and availability of providers to offer it. We are so thankful Calvert Lakes do exactly that.”

Enabling Adventure Fund

Living with disability incurs endless hidden costs; from assistive technologies and mobility aids, to reliance on a smaller number of services that can cater to specific needs. It's a sad reality that inclusivity and accessibility come at a cost. As we often hear, 'being disabled is expensive.'

Even here at the Lake District Calvert Trust, we require more funding than other centres to provide the extraordinary experiences we offer.

We're also reliant on the need for specialist equipment, high staff-to-guest ratios, and accessibility needs mean that we can't simply cram countless guests into dormitories like many typical outdoor adventure centres.

It's this financial frustration that fuels our efforts to raise support for our Enabling Adventure Fund.

Our Enabling Adventure Fund exists to remove this additional financial barrier. It provides bursaries that subsidise stays, enabling more people with disabilities, alongside their families and friends, to access life-changing outdoor experiences they would otherwise be unable to afford.



[Click here for more details >>](#)



Typically, our Enabling Adventure Fund supports residential guests who come to us as part of different groups. These groups are heavily affected by the hidden cost of disability in many areas of their lives already.

The groups that visit fall into the following categories.

45% are charities or clubs

26% are families and adult individuals

19% are schools or colleges

10% are care organisations and support workers

“As a school for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties and ASD, many of our young people require very close supervision throughout the day, even during unstructured times to support their communication, meet their medical needs, attend to personal care needs, and to keep themselves and others safe. Without this extra support, some young people would be unable to attend, as we simply would not have the resources to provide the necessary supervision and care that make their involvement possible.”

Ways to support us

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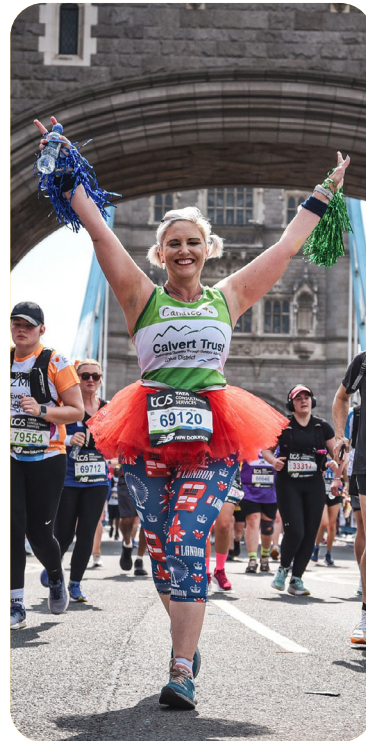
As a charity, we depend on the generosity of donors to bridge the gap between the real cost of delivering our programmes and what participants can afford. Without this support, many individuals would be unable to access the life-changing experiences we provide.

Regular monthly donations offer reliable income, enabling us to plan ahead, respond to growing demand, and ensure long-term sustainability for our services.

One-off donations are a hugely appreciated boost to our work that help us meet our immediate needs.

Introductions to new guests are always welcome. If you're connected to a school or support group for those with disabilities, we'd love to be introduced.

Volunteering at our main site or stables is a great opportunity for locals to get involved.



“Your staff gave everyone the confidence to aspire and achieve – thank you.”

“The best thing is meeting lots of different people of all ages and abilities. They have helped me feel more confident.”



“I saw so many signs of the positive experiences that were had this weekend. People who were very shy at the beginning were much more outgoing by the end of the trip and, for me, this is what the Calvert Trust does brilliantly.”



A final word from our Chief Executive

Impact is typically measured in relation to size. The bigger the better.

Our work here at the Lake District Calvert Trust is all about this big impact, but the reality is that it comes in small moments.

A moment of courage winning out over fear.
A moment of trust.

A moment where someone tries something new and surprises themselves.

These moments are over in the blink of an eye, but their impact can last for years. As I write this in our 50th anniversary year, I'm struck by how many of these moments have happened here. Thousands of guests with their own stories of impact. This is what The Lake District Calvert Trust is all about.

I loved seeing that that we welcomed so many people through our doors. But just like the years that came before, the impact of 2025 won't be defined by the numbers alone, but by the confidence built, the perceptions changed, and the barriers overcome. These are the moments that will continue to shape lives long after the year is over.

Thank you for being part of our story.

Sean Day

Fun stats...

22,441

Accessible minibus
miles covered

3,495

Marshmallows roasted
- give or take a few!

14,160

Arrows fired

5,496

Celebratory evening
drinks enjoyed

151

Canoe sessions
conquered

571

Calvert souvenirs
taken home as
mementos

49

Games room
disco nights



Lake District Calvert Trust
Little Crosthwaite
Cumbria, CA12 4QD

T: 017687 72255

E: enquiries@calvertlakes.org.uk

www.calvertlakes.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 270923

Company Registration No: 1240160

