Welcome to Auckland Castle Deer Park

Please look after yourself, each other, and the environment, by keeping to government guidelines on social distancing, and taking your litter home with you. The Deer Park has an array of wildlife, so please respect the many homes and habitats you will come across.

While you walk through the historic Deer Park, keep your eyes peeled for the abundant furry and feathered friends who live here:

**Green woodpeckers:** At first glance, these may look like a bird more suited to sunnier climates but they like it just fine here in Bishop Auckland.

**Otters:** Look out for any otters in the River Gaunless, swimming upstream of the River Wear. Otters are nocturnal, so the best time to spot them is first thing in the morning.

**Kingfishers:** Often spotted hidden in trees and shrubs overhanging the river, these illusive birds tend to hunt from exposed perches, and the Trevor Bridge is one of their favourite spots.

**Red ants:** The ant colonies here in the park are some of the biggest in England – you can even see the anthills on Google Earth. Red ants are a tasty delicacy for the green woodpecker so if you spot one, the other tends to be close by.
These are just a few of the things to look out for in the park:

1. **Seven Oaks Plain** An area with several veteran trees, each with their own character and form. The seven oak trees, which give this area of the park its name, were planted by Bishop William Van Mildert to commemorate his founding of the University of Durham in the 1830s.

2. **Weirs and Cascades** Weirs are designed to create calm, reflective pools, before the water is cascaded onwards. Sediment collects at the bottom of each pool, cleaning the water as it runs downstream.

3. **Deer House** This structure, now managed by English Heritage, was built in the 1760s by Bishop Richard Trevor to provide a feeding place and shelter for the deer in the park. Parties of guests would have been welcomed into the Tower for refreshments, where they could overlook the central square and enjoy the view of the park.

4. **Bishop Barrington Oak** Reportedly planted by Bishop Shute Barrington in 1794, this large oak stands proud on the banks of the River Gaunless. Opposite this tree are two more oaks which were planted around 50 years later by Bishop Edward Maltby and his son. The marker stones for the Maltby oaks still remain.

5. **Trevor Bridge** This bridge was built in 1757 for Bishop Richard Trevor, and connected the carriageway from Park Head to the Castle. One of several bridges built by Bishop Trevor, this bridge is the grandest and the only one to survive intact. His initials, RD (Richard Dunelm), are on the north side.

6. **Sweet Chestnuts** What did the Romans ever do for us? The Romans are responsible for introducing, amongst other things, sweet chestnuts (Castanea sativa). The trees were used as building materials and still are today; some of the tree guards in the park, which are used to protect young saplings from hungry rabbits, sheep and deer, are made from sweet chestnut wood.

7. **Ice House** Before the invention of the refrigerator, ice houses were built as a way of storing ice and preserving food. This example dates from the 1700s, when these subterranean domed structures became commonplace in the grounds of country houses and estates.

8. **Obelisk** This pyramid is a well head for the 18th-century water supply to the Castle.

9. **Pollarded Oaks** Around the park, you can see evidence of an ancient form of tree management, known as pollarding. The trees were pruned at a height of around eight foot to enable growth without damage from animals below. This was used commonly in the medieval period to allow land to be used for both grazing and timber production.

The Park is free for you to enjoy. If you'd like to give a donation to help us conserve it, please text PARK to 70490 to donate £3. This costs £3 plus one standard rate message.

Welcome to Auckland Castle Deer Park

We hope you enjoy your walk in the park. Share your experiences at [Twitter](http://twitter.com), [Facebook](http://facebook.com), [Instagram](http://instagram.com/aucklandproject.org)