

# National Trust Opens Outdoors Shop As New Gateway To Cheddar Gorge Countryside



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The first ever National Trust centre and shop for the outdoors has opened in Cheddar Gorge in Somerset, providing visitors with information to help them explore the surrounding Somerset countryside.

With not a tea towel or wooden duck in sight, visitors will be able to buy from a new outdoors product range, including walking socks and Ordnance Survey maps, in what will be a major change to the usual National Trust shopping experience.

More than half-a-million people a year take a [day out in Somerset](#) and visit Cheddar Gorge, part of the reason why this location was chosen as the first centre of its type to highlight the work of the National Trust in the outdoors.

Andy Mayled, National Trust General Manager for the Somerset Countryside, said: "We won't be selling the tea towels and lavender bags that you'd normally expect to find in a Trust shop.

"Our work in Cheddar Gorge is all about giving people access to the open countryside and this shop will sell the things needed to help people get out into the great outdoors. The new centre will help us to tell the story of the National Trust's work in Cheddar Gorge, of which we own half, and the wider Somerset countryside sites that we manage from Exmoor to Glastonbury Tor."

Mark Harold, the National Trust's champion for the outdoors, said: "Our founders recognised the need for everyone to find space to relax and recharge their batteries. We want to inspire everyone to play outside, to enjoy the beauty and fun our places offer for natural refreshment, essential to everyone's quality of life. Centres like this one at Cheddar should be the first stop for people looking for great ideas to explore their countryside."

Large panels and interactive wall displays in the centre will also highlight places to be explored and enjoyed in the area.

Rowena Nokes, Somerset Commercial Manager for the National Trust, explained: "The information panels show people where and how they can get out and about to enjoy the countryside, whether cycling, [camping](#), climbing or simply going for a [countryside walk](#).

"It is a new centre so we want to hear from our first visitors what they think about it, how they want to use Cheddar Gorge and what help we can give for them to make it possible. We want to change people's perception of the National Trust; we are not just about country houses, we look after coast and countryside as well and we really want to encourage people to get out into it."

Cheddar Gorge is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and one of the region's top rock climbing centres.

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Notes to editors:

**About**

**National**

**Trust:**

More than 30 different outdoor activities from canoeing to surfing and rock climbing to walking take place on National Trust land. With more than 250,000 hectares of countryside and 710 miles of coastline across England, Wales and Northern Ireland there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors with the National Trust. There are over 130 free [downloadable walks](#) and [cycling routes](#) on the National Trust website. These include some of the most iconic sites in the UK with bracing coastal walks at the White Cliffs of Dover to wandering through Constable country in Essex. The walks provide a map with directions and details of what might be seen en route.

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