



# Leisure

According to a survey by brewer Hoegaarden, urban dwellers suffer increased stress due to their lack of interaction with the natural environment and a sea view is the quickest and most effective way to reduce high stress levels for many people.

The survey also noted that 84% said being in contact with the natural elements made them feel more relaxed instantly. Other popular stress-busters included a walk in the park, the smell of cut grass and the sound of birds singing.

In which case, employees in Allerdale

must be among the least stressed in the country.

Allerdale is partly located in the Lake District National Park and part of the borough is designated as the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Lake District National Park provides a beautiful environment in which to relax, walk or participate in a sport.

The Solway Coast has an abundance of natural landscapes and is renowned for its spectacular sunsets. Beaches at

Silloth and Allonby have Seaside Award yellow flags and Allerdale's parks and open spaces came out top in a survey of people in the north of England. The Independent placed Allonby in the best 50 UK beaches in 2006, saying: "Allonby has a picturesque rural beach that offers great views across the Solway estuary towards Scotland and inland to the hills of the Lake District."

Allerdale also includes the western end of Hadrian's Wall, a World Heritage Site. Hadrian's Wall extends in the west to Bowness-on-Solway, but there are other



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Roman remains in Allerdale, including the milefortlet at Crosscanonby, and the fort at Maryport.

The popularity of Allerdale as a tourism destination means that there is a variety of leisure pursuits available in the area.

There are museums, historic houses, visitor centres, castles and gardens to explore.

Keswick's Theatre by the Lake, on the shores of Derwentwater, is a repertory theatre offering a year-round theatre and performing arts service. Annual attendances exceed 120,000.

There is a fun-packed programme of events and festivals in the borough, with highlights including music and arts festival Solfest, Keswick Agricultural Show, Cockermouth Summer Festival and Maryport Blues Festival, one of the best blues festivals in the country.

You can choose from cinemas and art centres in Keswick, Cockermouth and Workington, get real ale from Jennings Brewery and dine out in some top restaurants and bistros. The area has a rich tradition of fresh, locally-produced food and drink.

For those preferring less formal surroundings there is an abundance of both traditional and contemporary bars and public houses in the towns and villages throughout Allerdale.

Allerdale has a shopping experience for all. High street shoppers should head for Workington, where the new town centre offers leading name brands alongside independent boutiques. Wigton gained its market charter in 1262 and boasts a range of local shops. Keswick's weekly market adds to the shopping experience of this market town whilst Cockermouth regularly holds farmers' markets.

For those interested in art, there are galleries as well as major public art projects in the borough. Artists were commissioned to produce new works of art for permanent display around Workington's new retail development, made possible by £2.74 million of investment from the Northwest Regional Development Agency. These include Coast Line, an area paved in three colours of granite, showing a map of the west Cumbrian coast with granite seats; Lookout, the clock with a minute hand that rises into the air on the hour to give people a panoramic view of the town; and Workington's new public toilets, featuring a unique fish tank.

Whatever your interest there's something for everyone in Allerdale.

### Useful websites

#### Allerdale Borough Council

[www.allerdale.gov.uk/leisure](http://www.allerdale.gov.uk/leisure)

#### Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

[www.solwaycoastaonb.org.uk](http://www.solwaycoastaonb.org.uk)

#### Western Lake District

[www.western-lakedistrict.co.uk](http://www.western-lakedistrict.co.uk)

#### Keswick Tourism Association

[www.keswick.org](http://www.keswick.org)



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