

WARWICK ✦ CASTLE ✦

Accessibility Guide

Visitors with disabilities are always welcome to Warwick Castle and we operate a free carer ticket for all our disabled guests. This document provides information regarding the accessibility of the castle and grounds.

We recommend that you print this leaflet and use it as a guide throughout your visit. However, we do also provide copies of this information from the main turnstile entrance area or seasonally from the courtyard ticket unit in the central courtyard.

There are many ways to contact us before your visit should you have any questions. The customer services team are available daily from 9am to 5pm.

- Call us on **01926 495 421**. Please press the option for business reception to talk with one of the team.
- E-mail: **customer.information@warwick-castle.com**
- Write in: **Customer Information, Warwick Castle, Castle Lane, Warwick, CV34 4QU**
- Browse our website: **www.warwick-castle.com**

Arrival and car parking facilities

Car Parking: We have areas close to the castle entrance set aside for those parking with blue badges in both our Stables car park (£10 charge applies) and Stratford Road car park (£6.00 charge applies). Blue Badges must be displayed in your car.

People without badges and with mobility restrictions can be dropped off at the castle entrance at the Stables Car Park or at the coach turning

bays at the top of the Stratford Road Car Park.

Should you require either of these options please let our car park team know as you enter the car park. They can direct you to the right place.

If you are staying at our Knight's Village we have bays 8, 9 and 10 reserved exclusively for our accommodation guests to use.

Surfaces in both the Stratford Road and Stables car parks are tarmac. Visitors will mainly be directed to park on tarmac however on occasion, during busy times, you may be directed to park on the grass overflow field. For assistance with parking please speak to an attendant inside the car park.

Main entrance and the ticket offices

The main ticket office and the turnstiles entrance are located at the Stables Courtyard.

All of our disabled guests are entitled to **one free carer's ticket**. To collect this ticket please provide proof of disability at the ticket office in the form of a blue badge or a letter from DLA/Personal Independence. You will only need to purchase a ticket for the disabled guest either on the day or online at least 24 hours in advance of your visit.

Should visitors with limited mobility require a wheelchair, they can hire one from the ticket office at the main entrance, for a returnable £10 deposit. Please be aware that wheelchairs are available on a first come, first served basis. **Failure to return or damage caused to the wheelchair may result in retention of the deposit for repair or replacement.**

Attractions:

The Great Hall

Entry to the Great Hall and State Rooms is through the Great Hall front door. This involves climbing **eleven** wide and steep steps. There is currently no lift or ramp access into these rooms.

There is a hand rail provided along the sides of the steps so that guests with a mobility impairment can enter and then use a wheelchair on the first floor if required. We have a dedicated wheelchair available for this purpose. Please talk to any member of staff in the Great Hall to use this wheelchair.

Free guided tours are available from outside the Great Hall seven days a week, please contact our History Team who can be found in the Great Hall for more information. Please note that tours will vary on a daily basis.

State Rooms including The Chapel

The majority of the State Rooms are flat which means that all of our State Rooms are accessible after the first ascent to the Great Hall with the exception of the chapel where there are **three** steps to enter. The exit corridor has a narrow part measuring 67cm, for this reason, if you are using a wheelchair, we advise that once you reach the end room: The Blue Boudoir, you go back the way you came.

Royal Weekend Party

The Royal Weekend Party is located across two floors and includes some narrow passages and doorways. Entrance into the lower level is via the Great Hall entrance and is then fully accessible. There is a staircase up to the second floor with **26** stairs and a spiral exit staircase into the central courtyard with **35** stairs.

Princess Tower

The entrance is located in the Central Courtyard and involves climbing a series of **44** steps to the main room. The exit is a spiral staircase into the central courtyard with 35 steps. This is a timed attraction and will involve guests visiting as a group. At busy times the rooms can be quite full.

The attraction is not accessible for wheelchairs.

Time Tower

There are **19** steps to get into the Time Tower and descend **22** steps down a spiral stair case to exit. It is accessible for those with reduced mobility however, it is not wheelchair accessible. The attraction is located near The Mound in the Central Courtyard. Please be aware there may be some loud noises from the videos shown throughout this attraction.

Kingmaker

There are a number of steps which need to be navigated throughout the Kingmaker attraction. To exit into the Central Courtyard you have to go back up either **11** or **22** steps depending on which exit is taken. This attraction may be accessible for those with reduced mobility however it is inaccessible for wheelchair users due to the narrow doorways, steps and cobbled flooring throughout the attraction. Please be aware that this attraction has low light levels, atmospheric sounds and voice recordings throughout.

The Mill and Engine House

The Mill and Engine House is located on the South side of the castle along the River Avon. One entrance is via the East front and involves a series of 53 steps along an inclined pathway, which can be quite steep in places. A metal handrail runs along this stairway. Alternative access can be via the South Front pathway which is found near the Riverside arena. This entrance does not involve any steps but does have a slight inclined tarmac pathway. Once inside the mill and engine house there are a number of stairs throughout which totals 17. This attraction is not accessible by wheelchairs.

The Gaol (Jail)

The **24** steps down into the gaol are enclosed and at a steep incline. It is therefore not recommended for those who have limited mobility. Once inside the light levels are very low.

The Castle Dungeon

The Castle Dungeon is a walk through attraction bringing together live actor shows, special effects and is dark throughout. There are spiral steps within as well as narrow pathways and enclosed small rooms. Please be aware these rooms have strobe lights, loud noises, mirror maze and actors jumping out in some places as part of the attraction. Some areas include minor motion movements and smoke effects.

Due to the scary and jumpy nature of this attraction it is not suitable for those under the age of 10, pregnant ladies, people with heart conditions or those of a nervous disposition.

Disabled guests (and carer) without physical impairment wishing to experience the Castle Dungeon attraction must purchase a ticket to experience the full attraction.

Disabled guests (and carer) with physical impairment restricting mobility can experience the final four rooms free of charge, which are also wheelchair accessible. Please speak to the team at the Castle Dungeon entrance for more information.

The Horrible Histories Maze

The Horrible Histories Maze is accessible for standard size wheelchairs. Some areas such as the obstacle run are not suited for those with limited mobility however, there are alternate routes within the maze available. The Horrible Histories Maze is open subject to weather conditions. Adult supervision is recommended for children under 10.

Towers and Ramparts

There are over 500 steep, enclosed and winding steps throughout this attraction with low light levels. A great alternative may be the **Conqueror's Fortress** which does still allow some great views for those that can manage an inclined pathway with some steps throughout.

Conqueror's Fortress

This is an outdoor part of the castle walls and involves a sloping pathway and a series of 46 steps to reach the top. Good views can be found here of the local surroundings. To descend you can go back the way you came or via the official exit which is again a sloping pathway with a series of 76 steps. This is not accessible for wheelchairs.

Grounds and Gardens

We have a range throughout our grounds which include tarmac pathways, cobbles and grassy areas.

Accessible Toilet facilities

There is an accessible toilet facility situated in the Stables Courtyard at the main entrance. This facility has a pull chord alarm system should assistance be required.

We have further toilets located at the mill and engine house, conservatory mens and conservatory ladies which are a little larger and with support bars fitted. They do not accommodate a wheelchair.

Welfare Room

If you require the use of a quiet area, for medical reasons, prayer or breast-feeding we have the Welfare Room available. Please speak to any member of staff and they will assist you. The entrance is not wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair but does not involve any steps.

Assistance Dogs

Only assistance and guide dogs are allowed in the castle. All assistance dogs must be kept on a lead in all areas and are welcome throughout the Castle and grounds with the exception of the Tower & Ramparts, Castle Dungeon, Gaol, Princess Tower and Time Tower attractions. When attending any of our outdoor shows the teams in this area will advise the best place for you to stand/sit. Dogs must not be left unattended at any time. When you arrive at the castle please make staff

aware if there is an assistance dog in your group.

First Aid

We have trained First Aiders on site at all times who are happy to help should you require assistance during your visit. If any help is required please inform the nearest member of staff.

Induction Loops

Induction loops are located in the ticket offices and all indoor restaurants and shops. Signs for these can be found at the till points.

Braille information

We have a braille booklet detailing information on the Great Hall and State Rooms available for guests. Please speak to member of the History Team once inside the Great Hall to take advantage of this.

Fire evacuation

In the event of the fire alarm sounding within the castle, a member of staff will assist you with your best evacuation route.

Retail outlets

Stables Gift Shop: Located in the Stables Courtyard at the entrance and exit point. It is at ground level and fully accessible for wheelchairs.

Courtyard Shop: Located in the central courtyard. It is fully accessible for wheelchairs.

Kingmaker Shop: Located at the end of the Kingmaker attraction by the Undercroft restaurant. This area is underground and requires you to ascend and descend a number of steep steps in order to access the shop and is therefore not accessible for wheelchairs.

Seasonal outdoor retail outlets: We have a range of outlets which will only open during peak times such as the Summer holidays or weekends.

Many involve steps at the entrance.

Should you require assistance purchasing an item please do let a member of staff know.

Dining options

Coach House Restaurant: The newly refurbished Georgian Coach House Restaurant is situated within the Stables Courtyard, so on arrival you can start your day with a Costa coffee or relax over a hot lunch. The restaurant has movable furniture and is on ground level with an outdoor area, all being fully accessible.

The Undercroft Restaurant: offers a range of freshly prepared pizza and pasta dishes as well as unlimited salad and soft drinks. This restaurant is located underneath the castle down a number of steps and is therefore not wheelchair accessible.

The Conservatory Tea House: This traditional Victorian building has a beautiful and tranquil feeling as it acts as a focal point of the Peacock Gardens and offers a selection of homemade sandwiches, toasted sandwiches, salads, homemade soup, high tea, cakes, and hot and cold drinks. This restaurant is accessible for wheelchairs.

Seasonal outdoor units: we have a number of outdoor food vending units available to guests offering hot dogs, burgers, ice cream, donuts and coffee. You are served at the front of the unit so suitable for wheelchairs.

Top tips around the site

If using mobility aids we recommend going through the Bear and Clarence Tower entrance to access the Central Courtyard to avoid the cobbled stones of the Barbican.

Accessible Viewing Areas for our outdoor shows are available seasonally.

For Riverside access please use the path closest to the rear of The Mound, this pathway has a less steep gradient than the main path down

to the Riverside.

Knight's Village:

Accommodation

We have 2 lodges with wheelchair access available for our guests. Both lodges are on the ground floor and can sleep up to 4 people.

Toilets and Baby Changing

All lodges have a toilet and stand up shower located on the ground floor.

The reception and banquet hall has one wheelchair accessible toilet. All public toilets have baby changing facilities.

Walkways

There are raised wooden walkways which connect all of the lodges and the Knight's Village reception and they are suitable for wheelchairs .

Please note that in wet or icy conditions the walkways can become slippery.

Banqueting Hall

All food and beverage is served in the Banqueting Hall which is fully accessible.

Assistance Dogs are welcome in the Knight's Village in both the accommodation and the Banquet hall.

First Aid

We have at least one trained First Aider at the Knight's Village at all times who can help should you require assistance during your stay: please inform the nearest member of staff.

Wheelchair Hire when staying at the Knight's Village

There are a limited number of wheelchairs available at the castle on a first come first served basis, subject to availability. If you need a wheelchair on arrival at Knight's Village please call ahead to arrange this with the team. If you are going to the castle first and require a wheelchair first, please go to the turnstiles.

Quiet times

We have several recommended times around the year when is best to visit for guests who prefer a quieter time at the castle.

Please Note: these are guideline times in which we believe the attractions will be at their most and least busy – these may be subject to change depending on volume and varying school holidays.

Attraction	Quiet hours	Quiet dates	Busiest hours	Busiest dates
Great Hall, State Rooms and Royal Weekend Party	10-10:30am 3pm onwards	January – Feb half term November	10:30am- 3pm	Feb half term April-September Halloween week Christmas holidays Weekends
Towers and Ramparts, Kingmaker and Time Tower	10:30-11am 3pm onwards	January – Feb half term November- December	11am-3pm	Feb half term April-September Halloween week Weekends
Horrible Histories Maze	3pm onwards	January – Feb half term November- December	10am-3pm	Feb half term April-September Halloween week Weekends
The Mill and Engine House	10am-12pm 2pm onwards	January – March October-	12-2pm	April-September

		December		
The Mound	10-11am 3pm onwards	January – March September November - December	11am-3pm	April-August Halloween week
The Gaol	10-11am 3pm onwards	January – March September November - December	11am-3pm	April-August Halloween week Weekends

Future Plans

Warwick Castle is a grade 1 listed building which has formerly limited what we can achieve to make the Castle and grounds accessible. However, after recent consultation with English Heritage and the local authority we are delighted to announce that we have secured planning permission and are in the process of installing a wheelchair lift to the Ground Floor of the main house. This will provide level access to the Great Hall and State Rooms and the ground floor of the Royal Weekend Party exhibit. The lift is due to open by the end of May 2018.

Plans are also underway this year to install a 'Changing Rooms' facility for adult changing and accessible toilet facilities to the latest modern standard.

We are always looking for ways to improve our facilities where possible to help our visitors enjoy their visit to Warwick Castle. Please do pass on your comments about your visit to Warwick Castle or if there is something else we could add to this leaflet by:

speaking to a member of staff during your visit,

email us: guest.feedback@warwick-castle.com

call us on 01926 495421 and opt for Guest services.