

## **Croft Castle Access Statement**

Croft Castle and Parkland

Yarpole

Near Leominster

Herefordshire

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### **Introduction**

1. Croft Castle is a Grade I listed seventeenth-century castellated manor house and is accessible via a ramp at the entrance which has a width of 24.5 inches. The ground floor is fully accessible, but the first floor is only accessible via stairs.
2. Mobile phone reception is poor and intermittent. The number to call in an emergency is: 07920 086838
3. Assistance dogs are welcome in all parts of the site. Your dog will be welcomed throughout the site apart from within the castle and till-area of the tea-room, although they are welcome in the glazed area of the tea-room. We do ask that you keep them on a lead please.
4. Please leave your large bags in the storage box in the castle hall for conservation reasons. Pushchairs will also need to be left in the porch. We would like to make you aware that the first floor of the castle is only accessible via stairs.

### **Arrival & Parking Facilities**

1. Approach from B4362, turning north at Cock Gate between Bircher and Mortimer's Cross. Croft is signposted with brown signs from Ludlow to the Leominster road (A49) and from A4110 at Mortimer's Cross.
2. You can find 10 designated parking spaces for disabled visitors in the main car park. This parking area is approximately 30 metres from Visitor Reception.
3. The main car park surface is gravel and the over-flow car park surface is grass. The designated parking area for disabled visitors is also gravel.
4. There is an electric buggy/transfer vehicle which you can pick up from the car park. You can also use the transfer vehicle to be taken to the tea-room, shop and castle. However, this is not accessible for people who cannot transfer from their wheelchair.
5. The buggy/transfer vehicle can make lifts from the car park and visitor reception, along the accessible paths to the front of the castle and church, shop and tea-room. The buggy/transfer vehicle cannot drive into the walled garden or parkland.
6. The overflow car park surface is grass and depending on how busy the site is, could be approximately 100 yards away from Visitor Reception. When the overflow car park is in use, a 'pop-up' Visitor Reception is erected, which is around 30 yards from the overflow car park.



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## WCs

1. There are two unisex accessible toilets on site. One near the main tea-room, and one inside the castle.
2. The accessible toilet is approximately 1.6m by 2.6m.
3. The accessible toilet has a hand transfer for both sides.
4. There are no adult changing facilities on site.
5. The accessible toilet has a mixture of artificial and natural light. The artificial lights are not glaring or fluorescent.
6. There is one automatic hand-dryer in both the women's and men's toilet and one in the accessible toilet. There is no fluorescent lighting in any of the WCs.

## Visitor Reception

1. Visitor Reception is a purpose-built, small wooden building, with a wooden floor.
2. Visitor Reception can be accessed using a gently sloping path
3. The entrance door is approximately 1.6m wide.
4. The entrance and exit doors are manually opened. Both the entrance door and the exit door open outwards. Staff and volunteers can assist with opening the doors if required.
5. The reception desk is approximately 1m high. There are lower desks available which are 75cm high and staff will come round to talk to you if you cannot reach up to the desk.
6. Visitor Reception is well-lit, with lots of natural light. There are fluorescent bulbs.
7. There are 4 chairs available in Visitor Reception, without armrests.
8. There is an induction loop available in Visitor Reception.
9. There is an induction loop available at the membership recruitment desk.
10. There is one manual wheelchair available for loan and two single-seater powered mobility vehicle. Booking is essential for both; you can book by calling 01568 780 246.

## House

1. It is approximately 250 yards from the car park to Visitor Reception.
2. The surface of the paths and area outside the house is concrete and then there is loose gravel around the front of the castle.
3. The house is accessible via one steep stone step at the entrance. There is a ramp which staff can put out for wheelchair users. If your wheelchair is unable to fit onto the ramp which is 24.5 inches wide, and you are able to transfer to another chair, we can provide our house wheelchair for use.
4. The entrance door is manually operated and staff/volunteers can assist with opening the door if required. The door opens inwards and is approximately 1m wide.
5. The only access to the castle is through the main door.
6. There are rooms in the house with wooden floors, which will cause sound echoes.
7. The rooms have a mixture of natural and artificial light. The artificial lights are not glaring and there are no fluorescent bulbs on the ground floor or first floor.
8. The first floor is only accessible via a flight of carpeted stairs; there are 27 steps, with a banister. You will then descend the back stairs to exit, which includes 24 wooden steps with a banister. We also regret that wheelchairs cannot be used on the first floor due to access and fire safety concerns.
9. The only corridor in the house which is narrow (less than 65cm) is the corridor into the turret room.
10. There is space to turn a wheelchair easily in each room.

11. There are seats available for you to use at various points around the house, some with armrests.
12. There are not volunteers in each room, but we do have volunteers positioned around the house for your safety.
13. There is one accessible toilet in the house with a baby changing area as well.
14. There are guided tours available for the attics on selected days; the route also involves wooden steps. These tours will run depending on the availability of volunteers. The guides do not use induction loops or British Sign Language.
15. We do not have a virtual tour or braille guide available in the house. There is dressing up and other interactive activities available on the ground floor.
16. Our current ramp has a width restriction of 24.5 inches and a weight limit of 240 kg. Currently we cannot accommodate wider chairs or scooters. If the mobility scooter can fit up the ramp then it is welcomed inside. Only the ground floor is accessible as there is no lift access upstairs.
17. There are seats available for you both inside the castle and outside where you can sit.

## Catering

1. The tea-room is approximately 80 yards from visitor reception.
2. The pathway outside the tea-room is slightly gravelled concrete.
3. The entrance to the tea-room is level and accessible.
4. The main entrance door is manually operated and opens outwards. The door is approximately 100cm wide and staff can assist with opening the doors if required.
5. The tea-room has a stone floor and no wall hangings, so there will be sound echoes.
6. The tea-room contains lots of natural light and the artificial lights are not glaring. There are no fluorescent bulbs.
7. The counter height is higher than 850mm and there isn't a lower counter level to assist wheelchair users. The team will be happy to come round to serve you if you cannot reach up to the counter. They will also be happy to assist reaching down items if you're unable to reach.
8. Our friendly team will be happy to assist you when you require. If you're experiencing difficulty when queuing then please inform a member of staff and they will assist you.
9. Some of the tables are quite close together (smaller circulation space than 1200mm), but there are other tables with more space available. There are some picnic benches outside which have circulation spaces between the tables of around 1200mm.
10. The till points do not have induction loops.
11. We're afraid that we don't have large print or Braille menus.
12. We have straws available if needed, but we do not have large handled cutlery or double handled mugs.

## Retail

1. The shop is approximately 150 yards from Visitor Reception.
2. The surface outside the shop is concrete.
3. The entrance to the shop is level.
4. The first door is manually operated and opens inward. The door is approximately 1.2m wide and the team can assist with opening the door if required. The second door is manually operated and opens outward. It is 90cm wide.
5. The shop has a stone floor which causes some sound echoes.

6. The shop contains a mixture of natural light and artificial light but the artificial lights are not glaring.
7. There is a circulation space of 1.3m between the display stands.
8. The till point does not have an induction loop.
9. The team will assist in reaching down items to view if you cannot reach them.
10. There isn't a large print version of the price list, but the team can assist with letting you know the prices of items.

## Garden

1. There is an accessible route into the walled garden. There is an incline to reach the furthest end of the walled garden. There is a concrete path all the way around. There is no access into the 'Terrace Garden' which involves stone steps on either side to get both in and out of the garden.
2. The walled garden pathway is concrete and wheelchair and pushchair accessible. Pathways around the front of the castle are loose gravel and the entrance into the walled garden is made of cobbled stone.
3. The walled garden contains a long slope to the far end of the garden. There is also an incline in the driveway from the house to the carpark, but the pathway is made of concrete. Other paths around the garden are concrete or loose gravel and level.
4. There are stone steps into the entrance of the Terrace Garden, although this is only a small area of the gardens. An alternative entrance to the walled garden does involve a step, however the other pathways into the walled garden are level.
5. The steps do not have handrails.
6. There is one gate into the walled garden, but this is open for visitors to manually open.
7. Visitors can find an interpretation room in the walled garden with panels about current projects; however, these are not audio or available in braille.
8. You can find seats in the gardens and in the walled garden.
9. There is a small pond inside the walled garden, near the entrance.

## Contact details for more information

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