

Corfe Castle (Isle of Purbeck) Access Statement

Corfe Castle
Isle of Purbeck, National Trust
The Square
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Introduction

1. Corfe Castle was built over 1,000 years ago and has been a royal palace and fortress. The castle is built on a high limestone mound between two hills forming an iconic focal point for all visitors. Access to some areas for the less able or for wheelchair users is restricted by steps with the exception of the outer bailey by the entrance. There are steep slopes, drops, uneven stone paths/steps and grassy slopes that can become slippery when wet with certain footwear. No climbing on the walls or masonry is permitted.
2. There is mobile phone reception and access and staff are always on duty with radios in the castle to render assistance or call for emergency help if necessary.
3. Dogs on a short lead are welcome and allowed into the castle with the onus on the owners to remove any faecal matter and dispose of it in the correct manner to prevent any harm to any visitors to the site.
4. Visitors' prams can be left by the staff kiosk at the outer gatehouse.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. Corfe Castle National Trust property is well signposted from all roads and is part of Corfe Castle village.
2. The National Trust car park is located at Castle View Welcome Centre, East Street, Corfe Castle, BH20 5DR (01929) 477320 and is located on the main A351 road just prior to the turn off for Studland. National Trust members park free using their membership cards at the ticket machines, Non-members are required to either 'pay and display' or use the 'PaybyPhone' scheme – location 803345. There are four designated coach parking bays – booking is necessary in peak seasons
3. There are four designated disabled parking bays - paved access from the Welcome Centre to the Village is available via the main A351 running alongside the boundaries of the Castle but it uphill and steep in some places. Point to point this is roughly in the region of 400 metres.
4. Work has commenced on the Welcome Centre car park with 4/5 being completed already with a hardened resin bonding in place, the remaining sections are still with hardened stone and is mostly level. This can get dusty in dry times.
5. There are no transfer facilities provided by the Trust to/from Castle View to main entrance at The Square.
6. Visitors of all abilities are able to be dropped off in The Square before seeking appropriate parking.
7. There are additional non Trust parking facilities through the village, The Square itself has free parking (of limited duration) and there is a Pay & Display in West Street
8. Purbeck Park is located just off the roundabout on the A351 prior to entering Corfe Castle; there is access to the Railway line here and the ability to egress at Corfe Train station. This is ran independently to the Trust and members will not gain the benefit from free parking, there are walkways along the side of the train line that drop into the back of the Welcome Centre car park.
9. An overflow carpark is operated in peak seasons and are manned by at least 2 team members throughout the day, the location of this is in the field opposite the entrance to the Welcome Centre with the entrance being located on the A351.

WCs

1. There are three locations of toilets that the Trust operates on the property:
 - Located next to the visitor reception prior to entrance of the castle
 - Located in the Welcome centre (Car parking location)
 - Within the Tea Room
2. There are changing facilities in each of the male/female toilets (with the exception of the Tea Room) with appropriate disposal containers.
3. The toilet areas are lit by fluorescent lights; windows are frosted by the hand washing and sink areas. There are automatic air blade dryers at all locations.
4. Accessible toilets (alarmed) are located at the Welcome Centre and Visitor Reception

Visitor Reception – Welcome Centre (Castle View)

1. Internally of the Welcome Centre there is hard wood surfaces and seating, there is only one entry/exit point to the welcome centre and this is located on the building facing the A351
2. Access to the Welcome Centre is level, there is no slope or gradient
3. The visitor accessible area of the Welcome Centre is flooded with natural light with South and West walls having (mainly) floor to ceiling windows, artificial light to compliment this is with fluorescent bulbs.
4. Seating and tables are available throughout the Welcome Centre.
5. There are no manual wheelchairs or powered mobility vehicles available for loan.

Visitor Reception (Ticket Office)

1. The visitor reception (ticket office) is situated on the right of the path leading up to the castle from The Square and its entrance is accessible for all persons. The floor consists of uneven Purbeck flagstones and stones walls.
2. Visitors to site are greeted by staff members both externally (staff level and time of year dependant) and internally. The external door to the Visitor Reception has a width of 807cm (2' 7") allowing ease of access
3. There is an ever so slight slope within the reception area and some natural light but the area is mainly lit by LED roof spotlights to ensure sufficient visibility.
4. The entrance door is manually opened and in warmer weather remains open throughout opening times. Staff/volunteers will assist with opening the door if required.
5. The three till point pods are split evenly throughout the reception area to facilitate visitor flow and enhance privacy.
6. The reception area contains three desks with visitor seating for membership recruitment, this number drops to two during the winter season when the Christmas tree is then located within reception.
7. Induction loops will be available at the reception pods and membership recruitment desks.
8. There are no manual or powered mobility vehicles available for loan.

Corfe Castle (Ruins)

1. The main entrance to the ruins is accessible from the main car park from two main routes.
 - Along the permissive pathway which runs adjacent to the river and up alongside the North side of the castle
 - Along the main A351 to the Village (East Street)
2. The only entrance (Gate House) is located 50m from the Visitor Reception and roughly 400m from the Welcome Centre (Castle View)
3. The path to the Gate House from the visitor reception consists of uneven cobbles on an uphill slope, these can get slippery when wet
4. The outer gatehouse access is 4m wide with cobbled 3m wide path and grass verge on an upward slope through the grounds
5. There are limited guided tours available, these are bookable in advance.
6. There are interpretation boards located through the castle
7. There is no wheelchair access owing to the step beyond the South West gatehouse
8. There are quiet areas throughout the ruins especially in the outer and south west bailey

Food & Beverage – Tea Room

1. See above for access to the Tea Room from the main Carpark (Same as Ruins) as all locations are in the same proximity
2. The area directly outside the Tea Room is cobbled flagstone, some being slightly uneven.
3. Access is mainly through the front entrance with secondary access through the Tea Room garden. Primary access through the front door has no access limitations but secondary access to the building through the garden has two deep steps.
4. Both front and rear access are through manual doors, main access door is always open (unless severe weather) with staff and volunteers being able to assist if needed.
5. All visitor rooms have both soft and hard furnishings with seating and tables throughout
6. The second and third floors are not open to the general public, these are for staff and visitors only



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7. The counter height is higher than 850mm with no lower counter level currently in place for wheelchair users. Table assistance is provided for those that are less abled even during busier periods.
8. Staff will assist visitors as required and often table service occurs during quiet trading times so queuing is not always required.
9. Due to the nature of the building there are limited numbers of tables with 1,200mm of space around them. Staff will ensure wheelchair users are directed accordingly and movement of furniture made a priority to accommodate
10. The till point has an induction loop system to assist those with hearing impairments

Retail

1. See above for access to the Shop from the main Carpark (Same as Ruins) as all locations are in the same proximity
2. The pavement outside of the shop is only 2' 6" wide with slabbed uneven path, this can get slippery when wet and there is only one visitor access entry point. There is a slight slope into the shop which measures 114cm long and 133cm wide. A 'Caution Ramp' sticker is in place.
3. The entry point is a manually opened set of double doors, staff and volunteers are available to assist with those that are less abled or with pushchairs.
4. The first area of the shops is lit by spotlights with the back room lit up by strip lights and natural light in through the windows. There are two main large windows located by the entrance to the shop that allows natural light in.
5. There is a secondary area towards the back of the shop that is only accessible via three steps, wheelchair users will not be able to gain access to this section but staff are able to assist with their needs if items for sale are wanted to be viewed. There is limited headroom ranging from 156cm to 178cm on the steps but protective padding is in place to minimise injury if impact occurs. There is a hand rail available on the right of the steps.
6. The counter ranges in height from 71cm to 89.5cm high. PDQ machines are moveable down to the lower level.
7. Shopping bays/shelves range from 71cm to 174cm in height with staff being available to assist with viewing stock on the higher or lower levels.
8. The till points have induction loops systems to assist those with hearing impairments
9. Where possible we ensure there is a circulation space of 1200mm between display stands

Tea Room Garden

1. Access to the Tea Room is located at the back of the property and down 2 steps
2. Throughout the garden there are uneven paving slabs which will get slippery when wet with steps that lead to the lower garden section.
3. The garden furniture hosts a varying style of tables/seating to accommodate differing needs and requirements.

Contact details for more information

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