Corfe Castle (Isle of Purbeck) Access Statement

Corfe Castle
Isle of Purbeck, National Trust
The Square
Wareham
Dorset, BH20 5EZ
T: (01929) 481294
E: corfecastle@nationaltrust.org.uk

Introduction
1. Corfe Castle was built more than 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. Steps restrict access to some areas by the less able. The outer bailey near the entrance is accessible to all. 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 with radios are always on duty in the castle to give assistance or call for emergency help if necessary.
3. Well trained 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.
4. Visitors' prams can be left by the staff kiosk at the outer gatehouse. Child carriers are available but size restrictions may apply.

Arrival & Parking Facilities
1. Corfe Castle 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 on the main A351 road just prior to the turn off for Studland when approaching from the direction of Wareham. National Trust members park free using their membership cards at the ticket machines. Non-members are required to pay and display.
3. There are four designated coach parking bays – booking is necessary in peak seasons.
4. There are four designated disabled parking bays.
5. There are no transfer facilities provided by the Trust to/from Castle View to The Square.
6. Visitors of all abilities can be dropped off in The Square before seeking appropriate parking.
7. There are additional non Trust parking facilities in the village. The Square itself has free parking (of limited duration) and there is a Pay & Display in West Street.
8. Norden car park is located just off the roundabout on the A351 prior to entering Corfe Castle village from the direction of Wareham; there is access to Swanage Railway services here with the ability to get off at Corfe Castle station for access to the castle. Norden car park is independent of the Trust and members will not benefit from free parking. There is a footpath linking Norden car park with Castle View via an unmanned pedestrian level crossing.
9. An overflow carpark is operated in peak seasons and is manned by at least two team members throughout the day. The location of this is in the field opposite the entrance to the Castle View with the entrance being located on the A351.

WCs
1. There are three toilet locations on the property:
   • Next to the visitor reception at the main entrance to the castle,
   • Castle View Welcome centre (Car parking location),
   • Within the tea-room.
2. There are baby 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 Castle View Welcome Centre and Visitor Reception.
1. Inside Castle View Welcome Centre there are hard wood surfaces and seating. There is only one entry/exit point and this is located on the side of 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 the south and west walls having (mainly) floor to ceiling windows. There is artificial light to compliment this from 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 there are stone walls.

2. Visitors to site are greeted by staff members both outside (staff level and time of year dependant) and inside the Visitor Reception building. The external door to the Visitor Reception has a width of 807cm (2' 7") allowing ease of access.

3. There is a 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 a Christmas tree is located within the reception area.

7. Induction loops will be available at the reception pods and membership recruitment desks.

8. There are no manual or powered mobility vehicles available.

Corfe Castle (Ruins)

1. The main entrance to the ruins is accessible from the main car park from two main routes:
   • Along the pathway that runs by the side of the river and alongside the North side of the castle,
   • Along the main A351 (East Street) to the village.

2. The main 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 a 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 beyond the South West gatehouse owing to a step.

8. There are quiet areas throughout the ruins especially in the outer bailey and south west bailey.

Catering

1. See above for access to the tea-room from the main car park as it is located close to the Visitor Reception at the entrance to the castle.

2. The area directly outside the tea-room consists of cobbled flagstones, some being slightly uneven.

3. Access is mainly through the main entrance with secondary access through the tea-room garden. The main entrance has no access limitations but secondary access to the building through the garden has two deep steps.

4. Both front and rear access is through manual doors. The main access door is open at all times (unless during severe weather) with staff and volunteers being able to assist if needed.

5. All visitor accessible 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.
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 able 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 a limited numbers of tables with 1,200mm of space around them. Staff will ensure wheelchair users are directed accordingly and that movement of furniture is made a priority to accommodate them.

10. The till point has an induction loop system to assist those with hearing impairments.

11. Large print and braille menus are not currently available.

12. Large handled cutlery, double handled mugs or straws are not currently available.

Retail

1. See above for access to the shop from the main car park as it is located close to the tea-room and Visitor Reception.

2. The pavement outside the shop is 2’ 6” wide and is a slabbend uneven path. This can get slippery when wet. 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 front area of the shop is lit by spotlights. There are two large windows that allow natural light in. The back room is lit by strip lights and natural light from the windows.

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 they would like to see items for sale. There is limited headroom ranging from 156cm to 178cm on the steps but protective padding is in place. There is a handrail on the right of the steps.

6. The counter ranges in height from 71cm to 89.5cm. 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 loop systems to assist those with hearing impairments.

9. Where possible we ensure there is a circulation space of 1,200mm between display stands.

Tea-room Garden

1. Throughout the garden there are uneven paving slabs which get slippery when wet. Access to the lower garden area is via a grassy slope with a shallow gradient and steps. The upper garden is wheelchair accessible but not the lower area.

2. Secondary access to the tea-room from the garden is located at the back of the building via two steps. The door frame is low and there is a handrail in place, however access to the tea-room can be gained via the main entrance.

3. The garden furniture is of a variety of styles to accommodate different needs and requirements.

Contact details for more information

James Gould
Operations Manager, Corfe Castle
Isle of Purbeck Portfolio
Purbeck Office
Currendon Farm
Currendon Hill
Swanage
BH19 3AX

T: (01929) 452321
T: 07990 565503
E: james.gould@nationaltrust.org.uk

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