

National Trust

Castle Drogo Access Statement

Twentieth century castle situated on Dartmoor overlooking the Teign Gorge.

Contact details

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Points to note

- There is reasonable mobile phone signal across the site but this does deteriorate out on the estate. To speak to a member of staff at the property call 01647 433306 or 999 in an emergency.
- Assistance dogs are welcome throughout the property and there is a water bowl outside of Visitor Reception which is refilled regularly. Dogs on leads are welcome around the grounds but not in the formal garden, cafe or house.
- There is 1 manual wheelchair at Visitor Reception for loan.
- **The only step free access in the house is to the Entrance Hall and Library.** To the other floors there are steps. Access to Entrance hall and Library may be temporarily unavailable due to the building project, but prior notice will be given on the website.
- There are 3 manual wheelchairs on loan in the castle, one at each floor but not on the top floor.
- Due to the extensive conservation project that will last until the end of 2019 the visitor route is subject to change and due to the repair work many windows have been taken out and replaced with artificial light. Large bags need to be given up at the entrance to the castle.
- There are many steps within the garden, but different levels can be accessed via the main drive.

Arrival and Parking Facilities

- There are brown signs from the A30 directing you to Castle Drogo. Both approaches from the A30 involve narrow lanes.
- The entrance is sign posted, follow the main drive up to the car park which is also sign posted.
- The main car park is Golpla (plastic reinforced gravel) and grass with painted space markers and is a short distance from visitor reception.
- There are 6 designated disabled car park spaces in the main car park. These spaces are also Golpla. To get to main reception visitors need to head towards the tarmac path, either side of these spaces and the distance from the start of the path to reception is 32 metres down a gentle slope.
- There is an overflow car park at the end of the main car park. This is on a slope with Devon banks and there are no space markers.
- There is a transfer vehicle (golf buggy) which regularly takes up to 5 visitors from visitor reception down the tarmac main drive to the castle and back again. If you ask the buggy

driver they will be able to take you back to the main car park or pick you up from it. It is not possible for the buggy to serve the overflow car park.

- If the designated spaces are full there is a drop off point at visitor reception which is clearly marked.

WCs

- There are WCs within the visitor reception building, including a right hand transfer accessible WC. This is 1.5m x2.2m.
- There are no adult changing facilities here but baby changing facilities are available.
- WCs have automatic hand driers, tiled walls and fluorescent lights.
- There are more WCs down at the castle but these are down 5 steps. There is no accessible WC in this area.

Visitor Reception

- This complex houses reception, café, shop and WCs.
- The gentle slope from the car park brings you down to a level circular area in which you then enter visitor reception through 2 automatic sliding doors; this is 1480mm wide. At the rear of the building exit is through 2 automatic sliding doors, again 1480 mm wide
- The building is constructed of a steel frame and wood cladding with glass windows and sliding doors.
- The surfacing in this area (except the shop floor which is a heavy duty floor covering) is polished recycled glass , and is laid from the reception through the café . Most of the lights at visitor centre are fluorescent, but with lots of glass it is normally naturally well lit.
- Within visitor reception there is much open space, enough for a 1500mm diameter turning circle, there are also 3 benches with armrests down the sides of the room.
- The reception desk is 850mm high, however, the desk is used as more of a counter and staff regularly move out from behind it to engage with visitors. The membership desk is lower at 750mm.
- There is one manual wheelchair available from visitor reception this is on a first come first serve basis.
- There is an induction loop at the counter.

The castle

- The house is roughly 200m from visitor reception. This is down the main tarmac drive.
- Upon reaching the entrance to the house the path switches from tarmac to loose gravel. There is always a ramp in place to get into the house. The door to the castle is 1200mm wide and opens inwards. When the castle is open this door is open fully.
- Upon entering the castle 2 rooms are available for wheelchair users as there are stairs to other floors. Powered wheelchairs are also welcome.
- For visitors unable to manage the stairs these we do have an iPad located in the hall for visitors to experience a visual tour of the property.
- In the unlikely event that we need to use another door we will we issue plenty of warning on the website as this entrance involves steps. This entrance is to the left of the main entrance, down one flight of steps, a 15 metre walk on gravel and then up a ramp into the castle. The doorway is 940mm wide and is inward opening.

- Castle Drogo is currently undergoing a 6 year conservation project and is throughout the project is not being displayed as a family home. Instead there are many installations and open storage areas within the castle. Some rooms have no soft furnishings and this can cause echoes. Some of the objects may be touched please ask a room guide for information.
- Due to the building work many windows have been removed and replaced with protection works thus there is no natural light in some rooms. None of the lighting is fluorescent.
- There are 4 floors on the visitor route. There are only 2 rooms on the ground floor and then the route goes down to the lower ground level via 22 shallow steps with no handrail. After the lower ground floor there are 2 more staircases to climb to reach the next 2 floors.
- There is one wheelchair situated on 3 different floors for visitors to borrow. One on the ground floor, lower ground floor and level one.
- Due to the building works the visitor route is subject to change. In all rooms (apart from Mr Drewe's bathroom on level one) there is enough space to turn a wheelchair.
- There are many seats for visitors to use around the house, but none have armrests.
- There are volunteers on each level but not in each room.
- There are WCs located just outside of house but these involve steps, there is not an accessible WC at the house.
- We do offer guided tours but these are ad hoc. There is a large print guide and an iPad with a visual tour available at the entrance hall.
- If you require quiet space please ask one of our room guides who will be able to find a suitable space for you.

Emergency evacuation

- The main fire exit route out of the building is via the main front door.
- The assembly point is outside of the castle by the yew hedge.
- There are 3 other alternate exit routes, these all involve steps.

Catering

- The café is located within the visitor centre building. The doorway is over 1500mm wide and is a sliding door that is fully opened when the café opens. There is plenty of space for a powered wheelchair.
- The café has many full height windows and a recycled glass floor with wooden tables and chairs, there can be echoes.
- Due to the big windows there is lots of natural light but there are some fluorescent lights as well.
- There is outdoor seating which can accommodate wheelchair users.
- The counter height is 850mm.
- Members of visitor groups can sit at tables if queuing is difficult and one member of the group can ask catering staff for assistance.
- Menus are printed above the café counter in a DDA approved font.
- The café is very spacious with lots of circulation space and tables are mostly 1200mm apart.
- There is an induction loop at the counter.

Retail

- Entrance to the shop is level and by the reception area. The doorway is over 1800 mm .

- Inside the shop the floor is a heavy duty covering and some of the lighting is fluorescent.
- There is another door in visitor reception which leads via a ramp to the garden. This doorway is also 1800mm .
- There is a circulation space of around 1200mm between the floor standing fixtures, some areas at the edges of the shop are 900mm. There are goods on the central tables and on the wall stands are reachable by wheelchair users.
- The counter is 760 mm and the team are able to assist with service and with lifting and carrying goods if required.
- There is not a price list but staff can assist with telling visitors the price.
- There is an induction loop at the counter.

Garden

- There is an access map available from visitor reception. The garden is terraced with many granite steps (with no handrail) with gravel paths.
- Most of the garden is accessible if you use the main drive just left to of the garden to bypass the steps. Coming up from the castle there are 2 level paths taking you into the garden without using steps.
- The first level path takes you into the rose garden and then visitors can if they choose travel 15 metres up the gravel path to admire the roses.
- The second level path takes you into the second level of the garden to admire the rose garden from above.
- There is also a slope taking you up to the Luncheon House and then visitors can get back to visitor reception via the shop.
- There are gates throughout the garden but these are fully open with the garden is open.
- There are many benches in the garden to admire the views.
- There are no water features.

Estate

- Castle Drogo is situated overlooking the Teign gorge. There are many winding paths leading down to the river.
- At places the gorge is very steep and many sections such as at Sharp Tor there are no barriers. Children and dogs should be supervised.
- Mr Drewe's path is wheelchair accessible, however, because of the building works it is now only accessible down a flight of steps.
- There is an easy 1 mile walk on Piddledown Common but this is not wheelchair friendly.
- The other walks down into the gorge can be steep in places, but are mainly flat by the river.

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