

Beaulieu

ACCESS STATEMENT

This document does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with disabilities, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer our visitors.

National Motor Museum | World of Top Gear | Beaulieu Abbey & Exhibition
Palace House | Grounds & Gardens

INTRODUCTION

The Beaulieu visitor attraction takes its adherence to the Equality Act seriously, and as such is committed to providing the best possible accessibility for every visitor.

Most of the Beaulieu attraction is accessible to all visitors. However, owing to the nature of some of the attractions, listed buildings in particular, there are strict limitations on the scope of possible alterations.

This document details the steps we have taken to ensure all visitors have the best possible experience at Beaulieu.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Staff at Beaulieu: Beaulieu staff undertake regular training in accessibility awareness and disability issues to ensure the highest standards of customer service are met at all times. We employ an Access Auditor to conduct regular inspections of the site and advise on improvements to facilities.

Assistance Dogs: Assistance dogs are welcome and can be used to access all areas of the site. Visitors wishing to bring a working dog onto the Monorail should first seek assistance from a member of staff.

Wheel Chair Hire: We offer free hire of manual wheelchairs and electric scooters, subject to availability. It is advisable to book these in advance by calling 01590 614646.

Access to Rides: We regret that not all of our additional features are fully accessible for customers who use wheelchairs or have limited walking ability. Some rides have strict operating requirements which are set by external safety officers in relation to the feasibility of emergency evacuation procedures.

Your Feedback: Beaulieu welcomes all visitor comments regarding accessibility as we continue to look for ways to improve the experience for future visitors. Dedicated accessibility feedback forms are available from Visitor Reception

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any further assistance please phone 01590 612345 or email visit@beaulieu.co.uk.

TRAVEL DIRECTIONS

Beaulieu is situated in Hampshire. It is located within the New Forest National Park between Bournemouth and Southampton.

By Road: Beaulieu is well signposted from all major routes. From the M27 exit at junction 2 and follow the brown and white tourist signs towards Beaulieu. For Sat Nav, please use the postcode SO42 7ZN. We recommend you follow the brown signage when in the vicinity.

By Bus: Wilts & Dorset buses have a limited service between Hythe and Lymington which only runs on Tuesday and Thursday. It drops visitors either at the Museum entrance or in Beaulieu village depending upon the route. Please phone 01202 338420 – the more bus advisors will help plan your route. (0830-1700 Mon - Fri) or visit morebus.co.uk

By Rail: The nearest mainline station is Brockenhurst. Taxi companies operate out of Brockenhurst; the cost of a one-way journey to Beaulieu is approximately £20. Please phone National Rail Enquiries on 08457 48 49 50 (24 hours a day) or visit nationalrail.co.uk to plan your journey to us.

By Ferry: The Hythe Ferry crosses Southampton Water and can be used to connect with bus services from Hythe. Please phone 02380 840722 or visit hytheferry.co.uk.

CAR PARKING & ARRIVAL

Car Park: Large signs direct vehicles from the road and into the car park. There is a disabled car park adjacent to Visitor Reception with 12 parking spaces, from which there is a level paved pathway to the main entrance door (see Appendix p.8, Fig.1). Additional 11 disabled spaces can be found nearby in our visitor car park.

Visitor Reception: Our Visitor Reception is accessed via a set of glass doors. The area is well lit with overhead and natural lighting and is level on a stone surface throughout. There are benches and seats with arm rests provided along our main windows for seating. (p.8, Fig.2)

The admission points are located in front of the main entrance doors. All admission desks are at a lowered level to allow comfortable use for wheel chair users and are fitted with discrete hearing loops (p.8, Fig.3). Large print leaflets can be obtained here on request.

Entering the Attraction: The site is fairly flat with a mixture of pathway surfaces. The surfaces are primarily tarmac and wheelchair friendly, with some areas accessed across short distances of gravel or shingle. Access into the attraction is via a tarmac pathway that leads up the spine of the site. From this main pathway visitors can access The National Motor Museum, The Brabazon Restaurant and disabled lavatories. (p.7-8, Fig. 4-7)

BRABAZON RESTAURANT

There is ramped access into the Brabazon Restaurant which is visible and clearly signposted on the left when leaving Visitor Reception. There are power assisted doors at this entrance (p.8, Fig.8). The restaurant is large with plenty of space to navigate around the tables. All service points are set at a suitable height for most users (p.8, Fig.9).

The floor is smooth and level throughout. The area is well lit with natural and overhead lighting. Staff will be happy to assist in carrying goods and trays if asked. There is an accessible lavatory on the main restaurant level. There is also an accessible lavatory on the lower level which is accessed from outside the building; these do not require a key.

NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM

The National Motor Museum has stone flooring and is generally well lit. Entrance to the Museum is through double glass doors. In the summer months these doors are usually fixed open. The museum has three floor levels and a series of exhibition booths with access available to each via ramps and lifts with fully trained staff on hand to assist (p.8-9, Fig.10-13).

There is a lowered information desk inside the museum with discrete hearing loops installed (p.9, Fig.14). Team members offer a range of tours, one being a Touch Tour for customers with visual impairments.

This tour allows visitors to handle objects and the surfaces of vehicles – ideally these would need to be booked in advance.

WORLD OF TOP GEAR

The *Top Gear* enormodrome recreates the look of the Top Gear studio, with a seven minute film running at intervals throughout the day.

Access is via a level, paved walkway (p.9, Fig.15). The entrance doors are wide enough for most wheelchairs to pass through, although the larger exit doors can be used as an alternative means of access if necessary (p.9, Fig.16).

The dome is enclosed with no natural light, but adequate internal lighting is provided as visitors enter and exit the area. During the showing of the film the lighting level is reduced in order to allow screens to be more easily viewed.

A hearing loop is installed and seats are available for visitors who are unable to stand for the duration of the film.

The Challenge Gallery has a level, plastic pathway with overhead lighting (p.9, Fig.17).

The *World of Top Gear Test Track Challenge* features miniature remote-controlled vehicles which can be driven around a small track (additional charge applies). The area surrounding the track is tarmac. The cars are controlled from fixed-

height consoles on the outside of the track with one set at a lower height than the others (p.9, Fig.18).

PALACE HOUSE

The lower level of Palace House is accessible to wheelchair users but due to the historic nature of the property we regret that there is no lift to provide access to the upper floor. The staircase has a handrail on one side. There is a short film about the upstairs rooms which can be requested from the guides. Palace House is carpeted throughout and is generally well lit with natural light and overhead lighting on exhibitions.

On the lower level of Palace House there are two steps down to the dining area and kitchen shop. Handrails are available but staff will be happy to walk visitors around to the private entrance to allow access without stairs if requested (p.10, Fig.19).

BEAULIEU ABBEY & EXHIBITION

The Abbey and the Domus exhibition is a grade one listed building, dating back to 1204. The exhibition documents the life of the Cistercian monks.

There is an accessible lavatory within the Abbey.

The paved lower levels of the Abbey, including the Cloister, are accessible for all when following the sign-posted wheelchair route (p.10-11, Fig.21-22). There are some

smaller additional routes that lead around the ruins – the pathways are compact gravel (p.11, Fig.22).

The Domus is above the Abbey Exhibition and can only be accessed by using the stone staircase and handrail (p.11, Fig.23). Once upstairs, the room is large and open with displays of impressive Wall Hangings that depict scenes from the history of the Abbey. If customers are unable to access the Domus because of the stairs, there is a book with images taken from the display (p.11, Fig.24).

SECRET ARMY EXHIBITION

There is a very slight change in level from the paved area outside the exhibition to the building itself, however once inside the exhibition benefits from good lighting and level access throughout (p.11, Fig.25).

RIDING THE MONORAIL

The Monorail gives a mile long, bird's eye view of the site and through the museum. The ride features a descriptive commentary.

There are two stations. The first is within the *World Of Top Gear* area; the second is at the opposite end of the site, near Palace House (p.11, Fig.26).

As the Monorail involves a complex evacuation procedure, the ride is only accessible to visitors who are able to climb the stairs to the platform unaided.

If visitors are unable to access the Monorail, there is a short DVD of the ride with commentary at the museum Information Desk.

RIDING THE VETERAN BUS

The Veteran Bus circles the site stopping at two bus stops. The bus is accessed via two steps with handrails (p.11, Fig.27). Wheelchairs can be taken on the bus if they fold down.

LITTLE BEAULIEU ADVENTURE PLAY

Little Beaulieu is a multi-level play facility offering a play experience for suitable for younger visitor of varied ages and abilities.

The ground levels are generally flat being a mixture of tarmac, rubber crumb and artificial grass with some woodchip.

The main structures, which are representative of buildings at the Beaulieu attraction, are accessed by ramps (p.12, Fig.28).

Little Beaulieu includes sensory play equipment such as musical instruments, tactile games and a sand pit are included. (p.12, Fig.29).

There are opportunities for children to play with natural materials in the form of planted areas such as trees and bushes

and the availability of natural materials like leaves and twigs, logs and boulders.

The space offers play opportunities for the whole family of all ages, which includes individual and cooperative activities.

There are private spaces to play and hide for quiet play within Little Beaulieu. These include hidey holes, tunnels, small nooks and cosy spaces.

There are two large family sized accessible lavatory units within Little Beaulieu. These are well signed posted and designed to meet the needs of most guests.

APPENDIX



Fig. 1 – Main pathway from disabled car park to Visitor Reception.



Fig. 2 – Interior of Visitor Reception



Fig. 3 – Customer till point.



Fig.4 – Main pathway leading through site.



Fig.5 – Access to National Motor Museum from main pathway.



Fig.6 – Access to Brabazon restaurant from main pathway.



Fig. 7 – Entry to accessible lavatories from main pathway.



Fig. 8 – Power assisted doors to Brabazon restaurant.



Fig. 9 – Till points in Brabazon restaurant



Fig. 10 – Lift from mezzanine to ground floor



Fig. 11 – Lift for steps on mezzanine level



Fig. 12 – Ramp to mezzanine level



Fig. 13 – Example of booths and ramp access



Fig. 14 – Information desk in the museum with DVD player



Fig. 15 – Paved walkway to the Top Gear Enormodrome



Fig. 16 – Top Gear entrance doors



Fig. 17 - Plastic footway in the Top Gear marquee exhibition space



Fig. 18 – Lowered control panel for World of Top Gear Test Track Challenge



Fig. 19 – Private entrance to allow access to lower floor of Palace House.



Fig. 20 – Wheelchair access route for the Abbey and Domus



Fig. 21 – Paved ground surface around the Abbey & Cloister



Fig. 22 – Additional compact gravel pathways leading through ruins

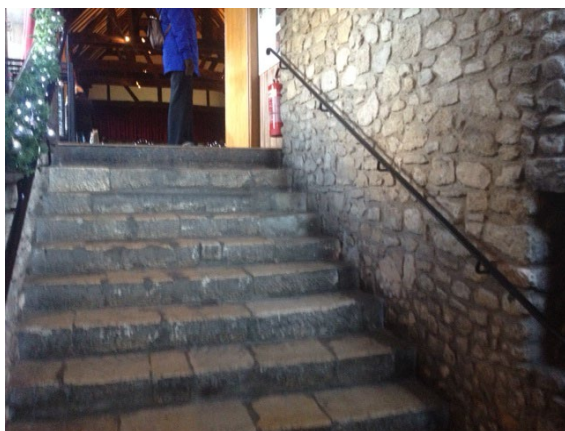


Fig. 23 – Staircase with handrail leading up to the Domus



Fig. 24 – Stairs up to Domus (no handrail). Image book of Domus.



Fig. 25 – Entrance to Secret Army Exhibition



Fig. 26 – North Monorail Station



Fig. 27 – Steps to access Veteran Bus



Fig. 28 – Ramp to Little Beaulieu main play structure

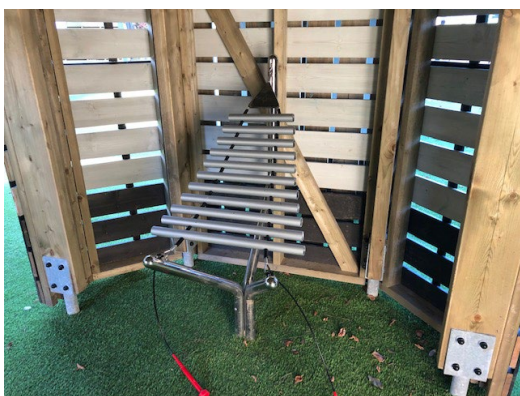


Fig. 29 – Sensory play