

Disability Access Statement

The Hawk Conservancy Trust

The Hawk Conservancy Trust is a national award winning family tourist attraction, situated 4 miles north of Andover, and signposted from the main A303 road. Much of the site is “out of doors” and flying displays are held daily, although severe weather condition may hamper what can be flown. All of the Trust’s facilities are accessible by flat tarmac paths, and all of the buildings are fully accessible. On July 2004 an access audit was carried out by Access for All on the Trust’s facilities. These recommendations have been set up into a disability action plan, many of these have already been actioned, and others are being planned for the coming seasons.

Arrival

On arrival there are reserved signed disabled car parking places, adjacent to the main entrance. The car park is a flat surface, of both tarmac and hard standing. There is a wide level access of flat tarmac to the front entrance with a gradient of 1:18-:12. At the entrance to the Trust there is a doorway width of 780mm, with a further 800mm clear opening onto the Trust shop from the reception.

There is an additional entrance to the side of the front entrance building, to accommodate the entry of larger powered or motorised vehicles. Assistance is available from staff in the Trust staff.

Trust Shop/Reception

The main entrance to the Trust enables you to purchase tickets for a day’s admission and tickets to all of the Trust’s activities. A large print guide is available, as well as a welcome sheet in several European languages. The reception is staffed from 10.30 am to 5.30pm and staff can give advice on both the Trust’s daily timetable and its special activities. There are items to purchase for a wide range of prices, with wide routes between the displays and merchandise, with shopping bags available to carry your purchases around the shop. There is a seat available for rest breaks whilst making your purchases. Staff are also available to offer any assistance required for your shopping. Also available from reception are the free hire of 4 manual wheelchairs, and the loan of 2 powered scooters for a small donation towards Andover Shopmobility who supplied the equipment. These can be pre-booked prior to your visit, and can be brought out to your car in the car park for ease of transferring. Entrance to the Trust’s grounds is through a large double doorway (670mm clear from each leaf) which when opened fully can accommodate large wheelchairs and motorised assistance transport. The Trust’s admission policy for disabled visitors is that one visitor plus an enabler pay only one admission fee, this applies to disabled individuals, disabled groups, visually impaired visitors, behavioural impaired visitors etc. Additional group booking discounts are available for pre booked groups of 15 or more.

The Grounds

The grounds are a level flat surface with no steps to any public area of the Trust. Flat tarmac paths are located around all areas of the grounds. Around the aviaries are several seats and benches to allow for rest breaks and the chance to sit and watch keeper's talks. There are three flying arenas at the Trust and they are all accessed by a flat tarmac path. All arenas have reserved areas for wheelchairs, which allow access right up to the edge of the arenas. All flying displays are accompanied by an informative educational commentary via loudspeaker systems. At the end of the 12 and 3.30 displays there is the opportunity to hold a British bird of prey. Touching sessions can be arranged for the visually impaired, and the Trust also has available stuffed birds, skeletons and recorded bird calls also for use by visually impaired visitors. Assistance and protective equipment is provided by Trust staff.

Toilets

To the right of the main entrance are the main Trust toilets. These provide toilets for male, female and disabled. The disabled toilet is of a large size providing adequate turning space for wheelchairs. (Doorway 840mm clear opening into a lobby area that provides access to the designated WC. There is a 1500mm turning space within the entrance lobby, with a further door to the cubicle 940mm clear opening) Assistance bars are provided, and a removable seat raiser. Also in the toilet is an emergency alarm bell linked to the Trust shop, where visitors can summon help in an emergency.

Parent and Baby Room

The wooden building which houses this facility is approached by a steep 1:7 ramp, with no level access outside the facility. The doorway (740mm width) opens directly onto the ramp. At the top of the ramp is a 20mm threshold. This room may also be used to change young adults or wheelchair users.

Bird of Prey Hospital/Rehabilitation Unit

There is a level access and wide entrance routes to the Bird of Prey hospital, with a cross fall of up to 1:10 on the footpath. The windows of this building have been lowered so that wheelchair users may see into the observation rooms. CCTV cameras have been fitted into the injured bird bays and these are relayed onto TV screens in the hospital foyer allowing visitors to watch the birds without disturbance. The rehabilitation unit has 825mm wide doorways with a gradient of 1:7 on the way in and 1:11 on the way out. The unit is approached by ramped access fitted with handrails and up stands.

Picnic Areas

This is accessed by 2 doorways of 770mm & 775mm wide. The Coffee Shop provides a wide range of hot food from full cooked breakfasts, light lunches, snacks, sweets, cakes and hot and cold drinks. There is a counter of 813mm, and trays available for placing your selection on, and staff are available to carry your selection to your table. Tables are round in nature, with a 710mm clear space under the tables, with central columns and feet protruding. Screens divide the coffee shop into smaller more intimate areas, but are moveable to enable large groups or visitors with disabled guests to sit together. Externally there is a large picnic area, accessed over a flat area covered with bark chippings. Picnic tables are provided with cut away sections covered with bark chippings. Picnic tables are provided with cut away sections that enable wheelchair users to gain access to the picnic tables. In addition there is a covered patio area, with picnic tables, which is assessed by a tarmac surface with a gradient of 1:6. (Wheelchair users may need assistance to access this area for safety reasons)

Education Room/Corporate Room

The education is full of displays about the conservation work of the Trust mounted on display boards. There are also interactive computer screens with bird of prey information and quizzes. The education centre has level access, no steps and has easy access to the computer screens.

The upstairs on this building is used for the Trust's corporate entertainment. Apart from a large open room there is also access to an outside balcony where drinks and meals can be taken whilst watching flying displays. The upstairs of the building can be assessed by stairs on the inside and outside of the building. For wheelchair users the upstairs of the building can be assessed by a ramp to the side of the building and then via a disabled lift. The building is also serviced by its own toilet block, including a disabled WC.

The Hides

There are two hides on site which allow open views over our wildflower meadow, and the opportunity to view wild birds coming into feed at our Red Kite and Heron feed. The hides also have a display board looking back at the history of the Trust. Both are approached by a ramped access with gradients of 1:6 and 1:8 and an entrance of 930mm wide clear door opening. Both ramps have handrails and kickboards. The ramps are covered with wire to prevent wheel slip in bad weather. Each hide has a designated area for wheelchair users with viewing holes at wheelchair level, there is also bench seating for other visitors.

Harris Hawk Flying Sessions

There are daily sessions where all visitors have the chance for a Harris hawk to fly to their fist. The flying arena has flat level access over grass that is regularly maintained.

The Meadow

The Trust has a seven acre wildflower meadow that has a path cut around our wildflower meadow for visitors to enjoy. The path is of a flat level grass surface that is regularly maintained and cut to a short surface, but may become muddy in wet weather.

Tractor Rides

During the summer months the Trust operates a free tractor ride around our wildflower meadow for our visitors. Unfortunately at the moment due to the height of the trailer and safety requirements of ramp heights, it is not accessible to wheelchair users. Research is currently underway to find equipment and resources to overcome this problem. However staff are available to assist with any visitors that wish to be transferred from their wheelchair into the trailer.

Play Area

The play area is accessed by a flat path covered in bark chippings. There is a range of play equipment some of which is accessible to wheelchair users. Most of the play area has a raised surface of 300mm to give a sufficient depth of safety wood chippings.

Signage

All of the aviaries have sign describing the birds and their habitat in clear print, on background colours recommended by the RNIB.

Information Leaflets

These are available on all the Trust's activities, and can be found in the reception area and information points around the grounds. These are printed in a large bold print format, but can be produced in a large print format if requested.

Website

This currently meets accessibility guidelines and there is the ability to increase the size of the font. There is a section on the website detailing the availability of facilities for our disabled guests, and a copy of this access statement can be found there.

For further information on the Trust, its activities and facilities, please call 01264 773850 or visit our website on www.hawkconservancy.org