

PORT LYMPNE RESERVE ACCESS STATEMENT

Introduction

Port Lympne Reserve is a 600 acre wild animal park and visitor attraction, with short break accommodations and houses over 700 rare and endangered animals.

Port Lympne is approximately 5 miles from Hythe and approximately 9 miles from Ashford in Kent.

The park is situated over a combination of flat and hilly ground with a safari ride along with walking zones. There are four key zones in the park, Basecamp, Carnivore Territory, Dinosaur Forest and Primate Trail.

Port Lympne have endeavoured to ensure that we could consistently deliver an inclusive environment i.e. the experience could be used by everyone, regardless of age, gender or disability. Throughout the development of the park we have sought ways to break down any unnecessary physical barriers and continue to listen to the needs of our customers.

An integral part of the development process of Port Lympne addresses the needs to cater for disabled people.

Terrain:

Although the paths are generally tarmac, parts of the 600-acre park are very hilly and steep. If you use a mobility scooter please contact us in advance on 01303 264647 for advice and assistance.

Assistance dogs:

We regret that dogs are not permitted within the park due to welfare regulations. Please make alternative arrangements for your dog before visiting. Please do not leave dogs in cars.

Items not permitted in the park

We regret that balls, balloons, bikes, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, drones etc. are not permitted within the park. Please leave these items in your vehicle.

Hours of Operation:

Summer: 9.30am-6.30pm (last admission 3pm)

Winter: 9.30am-5pm (last admission 2.30pm)

Port Lympne Reserve is open every day except Christmas Day.

Local Accessible Taxi: Folkestone Taxis 01303 252000

Local Public Transport: Stagecoach Bus Services www.stagecoachbus.com

Timetable enquiries: 0871 200 22 33 calls cost 10p per minute plus network extras.

Address:

Port Lympne Reserve,
Aldington Road,
Lympne,
Nr Ashford
Kent, CT21 4PD
Telephone: 01303 264647

Fax: 01303 264944

Email: info@aspinallfoundation.org

Website: www.aspinallfoundation.org

Grid Reference: TR121352

Contact details:

Visitors with any questions or requiring advice on your visit can call us on 01303 264647 and we'd be delighted to help, or you may prefer to visit our sister park, Howletts, which is flatter and more accessible for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

Pre-Arrival Travelling by Public Transport

Port Lympne Reserve is approximately a 1 hour and 20 minutes by train and bus journey from Charing Cross or Victoria railway station in London, or approximately 40 minutes from St Pancras International, London, on the high-speed service (Please see South Eastern Trains website for details). Take the train to Ashford International station, and from here take a bus journey from the domestic station side. There are regular bus services to Port Lympne Reserve serviced by Stagecoach. The service runs from Ashford and Folkestone depots and is the 10A. Please see their website www.stagecoachbus.com for more details.

Port Lympne is 3.4 miles from Westenhanger Train Station. The bus route 10A does not service this station but a taxi service should be available. The nearest company to call is Folkestone Taxis on 01303 252000.

Ashford Train station is 9.6 miles from the park and Folkestone is 9.8 miles from the park. Both stations are serviced by the local bus company, Stagecoach. Please visit their website for more details. The 10A service stops at Port Lympne Reserve Visitor Car Park in the Summer season and just outside the entrance in Winter.

Travelling from Overseas:

The park is easily reached from the Channel ports and is only a 10-minute drive from Le Shuttle terminal. Eurostar passengers alighting at Ashford International station can take the number 10 Stagecoach bus to the park entrance.

Car Parking and Arrival:

The car park is very large with parking bays on the grass and on hard standing. Designated disabled parking is located at the base of the footbridge on the hard standing. There are 6 disabled parking bays. Access to the main entrance (gatehouse) and entrance to the park is via the footbridge. The ramp is fairly steep but there are no kerbs preventing wheelchair access. A minibus with wheelchair access is available on request if you encounter difficulties entering the park. Please call 01303 264647 in advance for assistance. Parking is free and there is plenty of space for coach parking.

Main Entrance and Ticketing:

The main entrance is staffed during opening hours. Doors to the entrance open outwards manually. The doors are suitable width to allow wheelchair access into the main entrance. The doors out of the gatehouse are suitable width for wheelchair users with a ramp to exit. The main entrance is well lit (fluorescent tube) and tiled. Every effort is made to ensure that visitors with accessibility restrictions can navigate freely through our main entrance.

The gatehouse is open plan and the ticket desks are high, however all staff give priority to ensuring the comfort of visitors with disability.

Concession Prices:

Concessionary tickets are available. They are discounted from the standard full price admission.

A concessionary day ticket will permit entrance for one day. Concessionary tickets do not apply to children under 3 as they are entitled to free entry. However, if the child under 3 years old requires a registered carer, the registered carer will be required to purchase a concessionary rate adult day ticket.

A concessionary membership will permit the user entry to the park for one year from the date of purchase. Our admission policy for a concessionary membership will allow the necessary companion, or carer, of a disabled person to purchase a concessionary membership card which can subsequently be passed to any other companion or carer on future visits throughout the year of validity of the ticket. Photo identification will not be requested on the 'carer' card, however the carer can only gain admission to the wild animal park when accompanying the disabled person. Address or company details may be requested for the carer card.

The disabled person, companion or carer must show the following identification to qualify for concessionary rates and/or access to our carer card; Benefit Award Letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (e.g. for Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance or Incapacity Benefit) or a Blue Badge.

The Park and Zones

Basecamp:

A combination of flat and hilly terrain with a variety of animal enclosures and paddocks.

Facilities at Basecamp:

In this zone you will find the main entrance gatehouse and retail store, toilets (male/female/disabled/baby change), Pinewood Cafe, play area, Basecamp Café, Guest Services, Port Lympne Hotel entrance and Safari pick up point.

Wheelchair access is available at the main entrance, Pinewood Café, Basecamp Café, Guest Services and throughout this zone. For those needing assistance, the park has an on-call minibus service for those having difficulties and can transport you to any area required. We would ask visitors to notify any member of staff that they require assistance and this will be arranged.

Guest Services

This is the main check in point for overnight guests and also houses the Ranger station. There is a ramp to access Guest Services and a wide doorway. Guest Services is manned 24hrs a day.

Buildings Access for Port Lympne Hotel

Access to Port Lympne Hotel is via a ramp.

Access to the gardens is via steps only. Please note there are ponds in the gardens so children and vulnerable members of your group should be supervised.

Access to the Aspinall Suite is level.

South American, Asian and African Experience:

Safari ride lasting approximately 50 minutes. The journey from Basecamp to Carnivore Territory lasts approximately 45 minutes. Visitors will need to embark at the safari truck pick up point at Basecamp and can disembark at Carnivore Territory to explore Dinosaur Forest, visit Babydoll's Wood Fired Pizza restaurant and see big and small cats. If you do not wish to disembark at Carnivore Territory you can remain on the vehicle until it returns to Basecamp, where you must disembark.

Visitors can get on a safari truck at Carnivore Territory to return to Basecamp and then must disembark.

Prams, buggies and push chairs are not permitted on the safari trucks, however there is a buggy park at Basecamp where prams, push chairs and buggies can be left. Please take all valuables with you on the truck. Free push chairs are available at the Gatehouse, Basecamp and Carnivore Territory for public use.

Some of the safari vehicles have been adapted to take wheelchairs. Please ask at the Gatehouse for more information about when these trucks are in use during the day and they will book your safari time on specific adapted truck safaris.

The trucks can carry one folding wheelchair which will travel with the driver if the passenger is able to mount the steps into the truck. There are a limited number of wheelchairs for hire and a refundable deposit is required. Please book in advance on 01303 264647.

There is a covered wheelchair and pushchair drop off/pick up point at Basecamp where items are left at visitors' own risk, however we recommend that you leave these items in your vehicle where possible. Port Lympne Reserve does not accept responsibility for loss or damage of unattended wheelchairs and pushchairs. Buggies are available for use in each of the zones.

Carnivore Territory

Carnivore Territory can be accessed from either the safari truck stop after the safari tour, before the truck returns to Basecamp, or via the walking route through Primate Trail.

Carnivore Territory has a play area, catering outlets including Babydoll's Wood Fired Pizza, Dinosaur Shop and toilet facilities alongside big cat and small cat enclosures. Meerkat Shack, Gelateria and BBQ (burgers and hotdogs) are seasonal catering outlets.

This area is mainly level.

The entrance to Dinosaur Forest is in Carnivore Territory.

Dinosaur Forest

A three-acre walking experience with slight slopes. Pathways vary in width. Dinosaur models are life sized and anatomically correct.

Primate Trail

This is a long steep hill with Tapir paddocks and primate enclosures that leads past Palace of the Apes and the bottom of Port Lympne Hotel gardens and maze. The hill levels out at Palace of the

Apes and becomes level paths leading to the open topped baboon enclosure and then a final hill to Basecamp. There are pathways off the level areas to access further primate enclosures. These pathways are sloped.

Conservation Station

The Conservation Station is located opposite the Palace of the Apes and there are toilet facilities to the side of the building. The Conservation Station has wide doorways.

Palace of the Apes

A glass fronted enclosure with walkway leading to metal ramps leading up to a bridge enabling visitors to view the gorilla garden. There is a steep metal ramp leading off the bridge to return to the footpath.

General Park Facilities:

Toilet facilities including disabled toilets and baby changing are located in each Zone and marked on the park maps.

First Aid:

A number of our staff are trained first aiders however, they are only equipped to assist with minor injuries. Please ask the nearest member of staff for first aid assistance.

Catering areas

There are ramps to access Pinewood Café and Basecamp Café. Babydoll's Wood Fired Pizza restaurant in Carnivore Territory has steps to the entrance for the indoor restaurant, there are tables outside in the restaurant garden and further tables undercover outside.

Different dietary needs can be catered for and bottle warming is available at Basecamp café, Pinewood Café and Babydoll's Wood Fired Pizza.

Meerkat Shack, Carnivore Territory Gelateria and BBQ are seasonal catering outlets and may be closed during quieter periods.

Toilets are situated closely to all catering areas.