

Rufford Abbey Country Park Access Statement

Rufford Abbey Country Park welcomes visitors. We want to make sure it's enjoyed by guests, whatever their level of mobility or access needs. Please use these notes or ring our Visitor Information Office on **01623 821338** for more detailed advice to help you get into and around the park, safely and easily.

General Points

The park is 150 acres in size, a mixture of parkland, grassland, gardens, surfaced walks and buildings. Most of the park is flat, with just one short incline which may be difficult for push wheelchairs. This is on the far side of the lake in the area known as Scotland Bank. A **site plan** showing accessible paths around the park is available free and can be downloaded from our webpage www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/ruffordcp

Entrances and Car Parks

The park has two entrances, each with car parking and some spaces marked for blue badge holders.

- Rufford Abbey (off A614)
- Rufford Mill (off Wellow Lane)

A car parking charge of **£3** applies at **peak times** and this applies to all cars including **blue badge holders**. We recommend that visitors with mobility restrictions use the main Rufford Abbey entrance and car park, as this gives easier access to toilets, shops and Visitor Information.

Wheelchairs and Mobility Vehicles

All public facilities on site are accessible to wheelchair users except the Abbey ruins. Wheelchairs and electric mobility vehicles can be hired from the Visitor Information Office, in the Craft Centre Courtyard, open 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. A small charge of £2 per hour applies. Please book in advance to ensure availability. **Tel. 01623 821338.**

Toilets

Accessible toilet at Rufford Abbey (Craft Centre Courtyard). Radar key needed (ask at Visitor Information – we have a spare). There's also an accessible toilet at Rufford Mill, on the ground floor in the entrance to the Outdoor Living Shop

Paths and Surfaces

There is a mixture of different path types at Rufford Abbey Country Park. Areas immediately surrounding the Abbey remains are hardcore, crushed limestone or tarmac, giving a firm surface for wheelchairs and mobility scooters. The Craft Centre Courtyard (the historic former Abbey stableyard) is cobbled, but wheelchair / mobility vehicle users generally get around without problems.

Further out into the park paths are narrower, with a loose crushed limestone surface. Most, such as the circuit around the lake, are suitable for wheelchairs. Users of walking sticks and other mobility aids should be aware that paths through the woodland are more uneven. At times woodland paths can be covered by fallen leaves, making surfaces slippery in wet weather. For partially sighted visitors, the edges of woodland paths will often be indistinct. Please bear this in mind when choosing your route around the park.

Ask for a free **site plan** where paths are colour coded to show their level of accessibility.

Hard to Access Areas

The top storey of the **Abbey ruins** is not accessible to wheelchairs and can only be reached by stone steps. Because this is a scheduled ancient monument, building adaptations are not possible. Mobility-restricted and visually impaired visitors please note that the **Undercroft** of the Abbey is dimly lit and has a stone flagged floor, uneven in places. Please take extra care in this area.

Hearing Impaired Visitors

Our Visitor Information Office is equipped with a portable induction loop – please ask. If you are attending a function at the Talbot Suite, this has a built-in induction loop.

Blind / Visually Impaired Visitors

We can print and send out copies of our park events programme in large sized print on request, or order Braille and tape versions of park leaflets, including the park events leaflet. Please ask here at Visitor Information, or ring 01623 821338, or e-mail linda.hardy@nottsc.gov.uk

Need More Help?

Everyone's access needs are different. If you need extra information, help or advice in order to get around the park and enjoy your visit, don't hesitate to ask. Call Visitor Information, tel **(01623) 821338**, 10.30 am – 4.30 pm daily or e-mail linda.hardy@nottsc.gov.uk