

# Rufford Abbey Country Park Access Statement

We want to make sure the park is enjoyed by visitors, whatever their access needs. Please use these notes or ring our Tourist 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, including 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.

An **access map** showing accessible paths around the park is available free and can be downloaded from our webpage **[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/ruffordcp](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/ruffordcp)**

## Entrances and Car Parks

The park has two entrances, each with 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**. Our website has a downloadable calendar showing charging dates. We recommend that visitors with mobility restrictions use the main Rufford Abbey entrance and car park, which gives easier access to toilets, shops and Tourist 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 Tourist Information Office, in the Craft Centre Courtyard, open 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. A small charge of 50p per hour applies. Please book in advance to ensure availability. **Tel. 01623 821338, 10.30 am to 4.30pm daily.**

## Toilets

Accessible toilet at Rufford Abbey (Craft Centre Courtyard), and Changing Places toilet with hoist and changing bed. Radar key needed. Spare RADAR keys at Craft Centre shop or Coach House Café.

There's also an accessible toilet at Rufford Mill, on the ground floor, near the entrance to the Outdoor Living Shop

## **Paths and Surfaces**

There is a mixture of different path surfaces 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 scooter 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 may be indistinct. Please bear this in mind when choosing your route around the park.

On the park Access Map paths are colour coded to show their level of difficulty.

## **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 can be accessed with care, but it is a bat roost and thus only dimly lit. There are one or two shallow steps within the Undercroft. The entrance doorway has a wooden wedge ramp to aid wheelchair access.

## **Hearing Impaired Visitors**

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

## **Blind / Visually Impaired Visitors**

Our website has the facility to “talk” information. We can print and send out copies of our park events programme in large sized print on request, or order Braille and recorded versions of park leaflets, including the park events leaflet. Please ring 01623 821338, or e-mail [linda.hardy@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:linda.hardy@nottscc.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 Tourist Information, tel **(01623) 821338**, 10.30 am – 4.30 pm daily, e-mail our Visitor Services Officer [linda.hardy@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:linda.hardy@nottscc.gov.uk) or ask for a park ranger to assist you.