

Abergavenny Museum and Castle - Access Policy Statement

1. Introduction

This statement, deals in the main with issues of geographical and physical access. However matters of, intellectual, social, and cultural access, including the provision of access to our service through the Welsh language are addressed in sections 5-8.

Please note: "The access statement does not contain personal opinions regarding our suitability for those with disabilities but aims to describe the facilities and services we offer for all our visitors."

Abergavenny Museum and Castle is situated within its own Grounds and is located within easy walking distance of Abergavenny town centre in the beautiful county of Monmouthshire. It is one of the three museums run and managed by Monmouthshire County Council. The Museum has an active programme of temporary exhibitions, special events and a permanent display of museum collections relating to various aspects of life in Abergavenny and it's out lying villages through the ages. It also has a well stocked gift shop selling specialist books, postcards, toys, Museum and Castle souvenirs and a range of crafts from a local artist collective 'Made in Monmouthshire'.

2. Practical Information

Abergavenny Museum and Castle
Castle Street
Abergavenny
Monmouthshire
NP7 5EE

Tel: 01873 854282

Email: abergavennymuseum@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Website: www.abergavennymuseum.co.uk

T: www.twitter.com/AberMuseum

F: Find us on Facebook- Abergavenny Museum

Opening Times:

March to October: Monday to Saturday 11 am – 1 pm and 2 pm - 5pm,
Sunday 2 pm – 5 pm.

November to February: Monday to Saturday 11 am – 1 pm and 2 pm - 4 pm.

Admission Free

Pre-arranged group and school visits can be arranged out of normal hours.

3. Geographical Access

Arriving at the Museum and Castle

Train

The nearest railway station is Abergavenny located on Station Road, which is approximately 15 minutes walk away. Taxis are normally available at the station. There is a pay and display car park located at the Station. For further station information about the station: telephone National Rail enquires on 0845 748 4950 or follow this link.

<http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations/agv/details.html>

Bus

The bus station is approximately 10 minutes walk from the Museum and Castle and is located on Monmouth Road. You can also find Tourist Information located here. Bus Information is available throughout the year by telephoning 0871 200 2233 from 7 am – 10 pm daily. For online information for public transport, follow these links:

<http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/index.php?id=publictransport>
www.travelinecymru.info

Car

A small free car park is available for visitors to the Museum and Castle grounds. There are a number of public car parks nearby. The nearest is Castle Street Car park located very near to the Museum and Castle entrance.

<http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/index.php?id=parking>

Bikes

There are some railings in close proximity to the main entrance which may be suitable for chaining a bike. We cannot guarantee the security of the bike while on our premises. The Museum and Castle is located near to the National Cycle Route NCN 8 – Lôn Las Cymru.

For national cycle network and route information, telephone 0845 113 0065.

More information is available on www.sustrans.org.uk

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/map?searchKey=Search+our+mapping&searchType=search&Search=Find#329909,214045,5>

4. Physical Access

Please Note. The Museum building is listed and is set within an ancient monument. This makes necessary changes to improve access more problematic than might be found in other settings. However it is central to our policy to continue to enhance access to the buildings and collections for those with a physical or sensory disability.

Disabled parking

There is no dedicated disabled parking. However the car park is on one level and there are no steps between the car park and the museum. NB: The grounds of the Castle are uneven.

Arrival

The main entrance to the museum is approached via a gradual ramp from the Museum and Castle car park within the Castle grounds. The entrance door is normally fixed open during opening hours and is a double door with a width of 110 cm. This leads straight into a large vestibule measuring 361 cm by 251 cm. Our large community notice board is situated in here along with some tourist information. An umbrella stand is available for use. A double spiral staircase leads from here to our staff working areas. Straight facing is an internal glass door which is normally closed but has automatic door openers for optional use. The width of this door is 82.5 cm.

Reception

This door opens to our main reception, which is well-lit, with a reception desk to your immediate right as you enter. The shop is located opposite the reception desk on the left hand side as you enter the museum, all leading straight into the Keep gallery.

Link Corridor

From here, a short flight of steps lead down to the museum unisex and disabled toilet and baby changing facilities. Several fixed hooks for hanging coats are opposite the toilet door. Tourist information can also be found here.

Lower Gallery

Two short flights of steps going downwards with handrails lead to the Lower Gallery. This houses our changing programme of exhibitions. Disability access to this gallery is possible via a ramp leading from the Castle grounds. Please speak to the Custodian on duty to gain directions.

Basement

Continue through the Lower Gallery to the right and a steep flight of stairs with a handrail leads you downwards to our World War II Anderson Shelter with sound effects. A small set of steps leads down again to our Saddlers and leather working tools display, our Victorian Welsh Kitchen and our 1940's local Grocery Store. Please note, wheel chair access is not possible to the basis and those with mobility issues should take care.

Exit the Museum by taking a backwards route, up all the stairs. The reception desk is staffed during opening hours and is located less than 1 metre away from the internal entrance door. The reception desk has been designed to accommodate the needs of different users and is 78 cm high at its lowest point. Family backpacks can be borrowed for a non monetary deposit for family fun in the Castle Grounds. Our donation box is also located here.

Shop

The floor of the shop is level. High display shelves may not be accessed from a seated position. Staff are available to provide assistance. There is room to manoeuvre a pram or a wheelchair. Souvenirs including Abergavenny Museum and Castle guide books can be purchased from the Reception desk.

Toilet facilities

There is a unisex WC located on the ground floor near the main entrance which is wheelchair accessible via a double door width measurement of 116 cm. Toilet facility measurements 137.5 cm by 166.5 cm and comprise of toilet, wash hand basin, hot water provider, soap dispenser, automatic hand drier, baby changing table and a general purpose bin. The toilet roll dispenser is placed 108 cm from floor level. There is short handrail fixed to the wall.

Flooring

The floor of the entrance vestibule is both quarry tiled and carpeted. The spiral stairs for accessing workspace are metal. The reception area, shop and Old galleries are carpeted throughout. All of the stairs are stone with the exceptions of a small flight between the Keep and the Lower Gallery which are carpeted. The flooring of the toilet facilities on the ground floor is vinyl tiled.

Displays

The displays in the keep gallery feature 2D works and all work is captioned with text size 14 or above. 2D works are hung to a level to ensure as visibly accessible to users as possible.

There are a number of stairs to access the gallery and display areas. A small flight of stone steps to access the toilet facilities and a further flight of stone steps plus a smaller flight of carpeted steps these with a left hand bend to access the Old gallery. These steps can be by by-passed via a ramp to the Lower Gallery, by contacting the reception staff. A steep and long flight of steps provides access to the displays in the area of the 1940's general store. Staff and visitors by appointment have a double flight of metal spiral stairs to climb to access our work space and the Curator's office. All stairs have handrails along side them.

The displays in the museum in the Keep and Lower Galleries are a combination of works within glass or Perspex display cases, open display, and panels with a combination of bilingual (Welsh and English) text and images. We try to ensure text on these wall panels is at least size 16 with smaller captions at size 14. A large print copy of wall display texts can be made available on request.

Lighting

The reception and shop are well and evenly lit. The galleries are normally well and evenly lit except on occasion when light levels need to be lowered for conservation needs of specific art works. The stairs to the museum are well lit but some rooms in the museum displays have low light levels, due to the conservation needs of more vulnerable museum objects.

5. Intellectual access

We recognise that there can be intellectual barriers to access to our collections and events, and to overcome this, our displays are designed with regard to informing visitors with differing learning styles, prior knowledge, and/or abilities.

We provide three listening posts, one in the Old Gallery, one in the Welsh Kitchen and one in Basil Jones Grocery store. We have a wall mounted television screen which shows photographs on loop relevant to current exhibitions in the Old Gallery and all these provide interest to the exhibitions. Pre-arranged tours for groups, schools, colleges with specific needs can be arranged.

There are opportunities for handling objects and trying on replica costume throughout the museum.

We encourage the widest possible audience to study the collection and seek ways to improve and extend access to information and scholarly research. We consult with users, non-users, specialist organisations, and other museums and galleries, on the best and most practical ways of improving intellectual access.

Members of staff on duty will where possible provide assistance and additional information.

6. Social access

It is our policy to remove social barriers to access by ensuring that entry at low cost or no charge is offered for the Museums and special events, and where charges have to be made

7. Cultural access

We recognise that cultural or social barriers to accessing the Museum and its collections may exist. To challenge and overcome these barriers we will continue to undertake initiatives to reach different sectors of the community, and engage them with the Museum and its collections.

8. Welsh language

We recognise Welsh as an official language and its equal status with English. We therefore make as much of our offer available in Welsh as we can. This includes, our exhibition panels and captions, a selection of published material and our website is content.

9. Additional information

- All staff receives training that includes disability awareness and customer care.
- Assistance dogs are welcome inside the museum and gallery and Castle grounds. Non-assistance dogs are not.
- All measurements are approximate.
- We welcome suggestions on improving our service through comments books, phone, email etc.

Next review date – September 2017