

RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum

This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with access needs, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer all our guests/visitors.

Access Statement for RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum

Introduction



Situated in the countryside right next to the former Kent International Airport, the Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum tells the story of the RAF's two most iconic fighter planes used during the Battle of Britain and throughout the Second World War as well as the stories of the men and women who flew the planes. In addition to our display aircraft

(both of which were used during the Second World War) we have a wide ranging collection about the Home Front and the history of RAF Manston. Best of all, the museum is entirely free to visit!

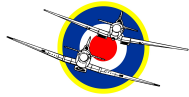
The museum is situated on entirely on flat ground and based in two open plan halls that are fully accessible to wheelchair users and visitors with limited mobility.



Key Points about the Spitfire Museum;

- *Small, self-funded charity.*
- *Member of the VisitEngland's Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme.*
- *Open 7 days a week apart from 24 December to 2 January.*
- *Step free access to the museum, cafeteria and shop.*
- *The Merlin Cafeteria which provides good food and refreshments.*
- *An easily accessible and evocative memorial garden.*
- *Helpful and knowledgeable volunteers.*
- *Helping/guide dogs are welcome.*

We regret that at this time we do not have a hearing loop system or large print/Braille leaflets. However both feature in the museum's forward plan.

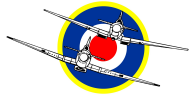


RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone +44 (0)1843 821 940 or email enquiries@spitfiremuseum.org.uk.

Pre-Arrival

- For full details and maps of how to reach us please see the "How to find us" section of our website at:
<http://www.spitfiremuseum.org.uk/location>
- The nearest railway station is Ramsgate which is 3.4 miles away. From the station you can take the 38 bus (operated by stagecoach) but this only passes by the station once an hour. Therefore, taxis are a better alternative. There is a taxi rank right outside the station entrance but if you require an accessible taxi which can be booked in advance, please see the "contact information" section of this statement.
- Bus; The only route that passes the museum is the 38 bus (Ramsgate-Palm Bay Loop). Please check the front of the bus or ask the driver if the bus goes through Manston and by the RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Museum. The drivers are usually local and are familiar with our museum. The stop for the museum is called "Esmonde Drive"; if unsure ask the driver when to alight from the bus. The stop itself is near a company called Polar Helicopters and when you look towards the crossroads you should see a camouflage painted jet on display. Walk towards the crossroads, cross and keep the jet on your right and you will see the museum. The distance between Esmonde Drive stop and the museum is approximately 125m or a 5 minute walk.
- The museum site has paved level paths throughout and there is a tarmac path opposite the museum on Manston Road.
- Unfortunately we do not offer a collection service but buses and taxis are all accessible and can accommodate 1 wheel chair at a time.
- There are no local services for visitors with limited mobility but the museum does provide an access statement, wheelchair, accessible toilet and is in itself accessible.



Car Parking and Arrival



- The museum has a free car park (27 spaces) and free coach park (4 bays). The distance from the furthest point of the car park to the museum entrance is 70m.

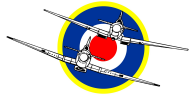
- There are 2 blue badge parking spaces available which are approximately 40m away from the main

museum entrance via level, paved paths. No fee is charged for blue badge parking.

- The surface from the car park to the museum entrance is level, firm, partially tarmac/paved and some gravel. During museum opening hours the paths are reasonably well lit (weather dependent). After parking in the museum car park please follow the "main entrance signs" to find the entrance to the museum. There is also another museum across the car park (RAF Manston History Museum). Their entrance fronts the car park.
- The museum has 3 drop off points for taxis; one in the coach park, one in the car park and one in front of the museum which has a little ramp for accessibility. We usually discourage the use of the latter because it's on the main road and not as safe. All drop-off points are either level or supplied with dropped kerbs.



- The main museum entrance has no steps, a slight ramp but no handrails. There are two sets of entry doors; both are manual, reasonably heavy and open outward. Please ask a museum volunteer for assistance with the doors if required. The clear opening width for the outer doors is a maximum of 1800mm/70.8ins. The clear opening width for the inner door is 910mm/36ins. The wheelchair and postcard stand are obstacles for the inner doors but both can be moved if required.



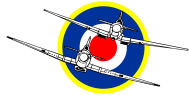
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- Alternatively there is an entry via the Merlin Cafeteria which has a clear opening width of 1670mm/67ins, however, people often sit with their chairs well back from table so there may be obstacles.

Main Entrance, Reception and Ticketing Area



- The main entrance to the museum is situated on the ground floor and is level throughout. There are no steps but there is a slight ramp leading to the main entrance doors from the outside.
- There is no seating available in the main entrance but there are benches nearby in the museum (1 in the Hurricane Hall and 2 in the Spitfire Hall).
- The entire museum has short, carpet flooring and is evenly lit by a mixture of fluorescent and spot lights.
- The reception desk is low throughout and fully accessible to wheelchair users and the museum has a wheelchair (1) that can be loaned out. As the museum is free entry to all visitors there are no charges for carers or people assisting.
- Unfortunately at this time there is no hearing loop but all important information is signposted for visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing.



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Attraction (displays, exhibits, rides etc.)

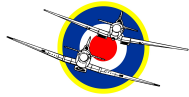


- The Spitfire & Hurricane is a static display centered on the two aircraft in their respective halls. There are no flashing lights but there is some 1940's themed music playing in both halls. Lighting is good and even throughout the museum and consists of a mixture of

overhead fluorescent and spot lights as well as LED lights (inside cases).

- The museum is open plan so there are no internal doors between the galleries; the flooring is level and consists of short carpet throughout the visitor route.
- There are benches interspersed around the museum (1 in the Hurricane Hall and 2 in the Spitfire Hall).
- Interpretation cards are typed where possible in a standard (Arial 12) black font on yellow background. There are some original period-written letters which may be difficult to read.





Public Toilets



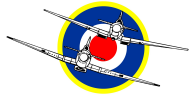
- Public toilets are located outside the Merlin Cafeteria. The unisex accessible toilet is in the same area of the museum and is only locked outside of museum opening times.

- From the cafe (and museum) access is level to the toilet. From the patio there is a short ramp to allow access to the toilet block including

the accessible toilet (to the right if coming from the patio directly ahead if coming from the cafe).

- The clear opening width of the accessible toilet is 810mm/31.8ins; to the right of the toilet (facing the toilet) there is a clear space for a wheelchair which measures 1000mm/39.3ins. The height of the WC from the floor is 400mm/15.7ins and there are horizontal (right of the WC) and vertical (left and right of the WC) grab rails. There is also an alarm cord to the left of the WC which, when pulled, will alert cafe staff who will come to your assistance. The accessible WC is fitted with the full range of fittings at lower height for easy access by wheelchair users. The water taps are operated by turn knob, soap by pushing a lever and the hand driers are motion sensor.
- The entire toilet block has a non-slip tiled level floor and is well lit by means of overhead fluorescent lights.
- In the event of an emergency (usually a fire) the alarm will sound and flashing lights will indicate the need for evacuation. Museum staff are trained to perform sweeps in the event of an emergency and the lock is a simple draw bar at waist level for easy exit in the event of an emergency.

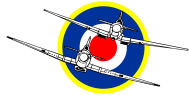




Catering



- The cafeteria is situated on the ground floor of the museum and has level, free access from the museum if entering the cafeteria from the outside patio there is a ramp directly ahead and 3 steps to the left. Like the museum, the cafe is completely open plan so access is all from the same area. The clear opening width of the main cafe doors is 1670mm/67ins, however, people often sit with their chairs well back from table so there may be obstacles.
- The cafeteria has an open layout and tables and chairs can be easily rearranged to accommodate wheelchairs. There are also high chairs available for infants. Tables measure 650mm/25.5ins from the floor and are provided with 4 standard chairs (no arm rests) each.
- The cafeteria is evenly lit in the seating area by standard light bulbs and at the till by a fluorescent bulb. All lighting is overhead. The floor is covered with a short, wear resistant carpet in the seating area and lino at the till.
- Food; Allergens are listed in the menu and visitors can ask that the chef leave out certain ingredients if necessary for allergy related reasons. There is also a vegetarian option in the menu. Food is ordered and paid for at the till and then brought to the table by cafe staff. Menus are available on all tables and dishes are also listed on a series of black boards at the till, staff are happy to read out the menu if requested to do so. The cafeteria crockery is all white ironstone and contrasts with the dark patterned plastic table cloths.
- The nearest accessible WC is in the toilet block which can be accessed from the cafe via the door on the right hand side at the far end of the cafe (nearest to museum door).



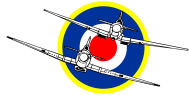
Shop

- The shop doubles as the reception desk and is entirely level. There are no doors between the museum entrance (width stated above) and the shop. There is walking space around the shop that is large enough to allow for wheelchairs and push chairs and the shop desk is provided with a low counter area. There are no display racks; all merchandise is on the counter. The shop features 1940's period music in the background.
- Unfortunately there is no hearing loop system yet but all relevant information is signposted.
- Volunteers are helpful and can assist where possible but given the differences in age, physical condition and training we cannot consistently state that they can lift heavy goods.

Grounds and Gardens



- The museum grounds are mostly flat with some raised banks and provision is made for a picnic area (near the car park), although food or drinks are not permitted in the Memorial Garden to the rear of the museum.
- Paths are a uniform 1100mm/43.3ins wide and are paved giving a firm step. The Memorial Garden has a paved area for ceremonies but is otherwise consisting of short, mown lawn.
- There are benches provided at regular intervals along footpaths and in the Memorial Garden, benches in the latter have been donated by relatives so please treat them with due respect.

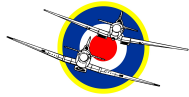


Additional Information

- Museum staff and volunteers receive disability awareness, evacuation and relevant health & safety training as part of their induction and the museum adheres strictly to relevant anti-discrimination legislation.
- We welcome trained assistance dogs and a water bowl is available on the cafe patio. Dogs are welcome on the grounds but visitors are reminded to clear up any dog mess and dogs must be kept on a lead at all times when on the museum grounds.
- Please exercise extreme caution when walking to the museum as the surrounding roads are not very accessible and most have a speed limit of 50 mph.

Future Plans

- The Memorial Trust is committed to provide relevant accessibility features as best as is possible.
- As a result of independent monitoring by organisations such as VisitEngland and the HSE, any issues are dealt with as promptly as is possible.
- Currently the museum lacks a hearing aid induction loop or large print/Braille information boards and panels but both feature in the museum's forward plan.
- Please note that we are an entirely self-funding organisation and rely on donations and retail income to make improvements to our services. As such improvements can take some time to be made but access and health & safety are given priority where possible for funding.
- The Memorial Trust welcomes any suggestions or comments to help improve its accessibility.



RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum

Contact Information

Address (Inc. postcode): RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum Manston Road Ramsgate Kent, UK CT12 5DF

Telephone: +44 (0)1843 821 940

Minicom: N/A

Email: enquiries@spitfiremuseum.org.uk

Website: www.spitfiremuseum.org.uk

Grid Reference: TR 33355 66569

Hours Of Operation: 10.00 - 16.00 GMT (November to March) and 10.00 - 17.00 BST (April to October)

Local Carers: Carers Support, Canterbury, Dover and Thanet
Tel: 01304 364637 80 Middle Street Deal Kent CT14 6HL

Local Equipment Hire: N/A

Local Accessible Taxi: Central Cars Ramsgate Address; Central Cars Ralph House 4B York Street Ramsgate Kent CT11 9DS Tel.: +44 (0)1843 888 888 Web: www.centralcarsthanet.co.uk

Local Public Transport: Stagecoach Kent Use bus route 38 or 38A for service to Ramsgate, Manston (where the museum is located), Birchington Web; www.stagecoachbus.com