



## Shorne Woods Country Park - Accessibility Guide

Last updated: June 2023



At Shorne Woods Country Park there is an eco-friendly visitor centre and restaurant, fishing lakes, trim trail and picnic and play areas, including 292 acres of beautiful woodlands, wetlands, and meadows to explore.

### **Accessibility at a glance:**

- Changing Places toilet
- Accessible toilets
- Inclusive playground including a wheelchair swing and accessible roundabout
- Ramped access to visitor centre with automatic double doors
- Over 2 miles of easy access routes
- 4 Tramper mobility scooters available to hire
- All kissing gates are mobility gates
- 2 accessible fishing swims
- Accessible meeting room with hearing induction loop
- Blue Badge holders can purchase a reduced annual parking ticket



# Kent Country Parks

If you have other accessibility queries in advance of your visit, please call 03000 41 35 00 or email [kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk). If you require a text phone, [BT RelayUK](#) offers a free intermediary service.

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## Facilities overview

### Level Access

- Changing Places toilet and 3 other accessible toilets
- Inclusive playground including a wheelchair swing and accessible roundabout
- Visitor Centre and gift shop accessible via ramped access from car park and automatic double doors
- Over 2 miles of easy access routes, ideal for wheelchair users and pushchairs. 4 Trampler mobility scooters available to hire (prior booking required)
- All kissing gates are mobility gates which can be opened with a RADAR key
- 2 accessible fishing swims with nearby parking for disabled fishers (accessible via RADAR key)
- Meeting room for hire is accessible via a lift and has a unisex accessible toilet within the room. Also has a hearing induction loop.

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- Blue Badge holders can purchase a reduced annual parking ticket. Visit [Parking season tickets - Kent County Council](#)

## Hearing

- The Chestnut meeting room includes a hearing loop
- All staff have disability awareness training.

## Visual

- All stairs have accompanying handrails
- Glass doors and full-height windows have contrast markings.
- Outdoor areas of the park walking routes do not have lighting fixtures
- Outdoor areas of the visitors centre has lighting fixtures
- Guide dogs facilities and water bowl on request

## Sensory

- The Volunteer Garden contains a range of sculpture and plants to create a quiet and peaceful area for visitors to interact in a variety of sensory ways with the landscape. The area includes benches and can be accessed from the Easy Access trail.
- The cafe is enclosed and may therefore be very noisy at busy times.
- In the 1st floor Chestnut meeting room, some visitors may feel floor vibrations from cafe equipment immediately below.
- There is a new sensory bench in the Visitor Centre allowing visitors to hear some of the animal sounds in the park and offering a tactile experience

## Getting there

Shorne Woods Country Park is located between Gravesend and Rochester and can be reached by car or public transport.

[Find Shorne Woods Country Park and plan your journey.](#)

## Parking

There are 20 hard standing allocated accessible blue badge parking spaces which are located in the [main car park](#) nearest to the visitor centre. Hatched area present at side only.

The visitor centre entrance is approximately 20 metres away and can be accessed via a ramp or stairs to the main entrance. In addition, there are a further 45 general car parking bays on hard standing that are within 50 metres of the visitor centre entrance and a further 200 general car parking bays on loose stone surfaces.

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# Kent Country Parks

If you are a Blue Badge holder, you can purchase a reduced annual season ticket in advance of your visit. The annual season ticket gives you access to all 9 of our country park car parks free of charge during the year.

You can purchase your season ticket [online](#) or call 03000 41 72 72. Have your Blue Badge number and credit or debit card handy for reference.



## Staff support

Our staff are here to help. All staff complete disability awareness training and can help advise you on accessibility features of the park, including hiring mobility scooters, accessible toilets, accessible walking routes, play facilities and angling spots.

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Large print and alternative formats are available on request.

## Inside spaces

### Information point and gift shop

The gift shop and information point is on the ground floor of the visitor centre and accessible through automatic double doors at the main entrance.

The information point is available on the left as you enter from the main doors. The information desk is 75cm tall and includes a lip making it approachable for all users.

The information point does not have a hearing induction loop.

### Chestnut Meeting room

The Chestnut Meeting Room is accessible via the platform lift from the ground floor. Having taken the lift to the upper floor, the Chestnut meeting room is located directly ahead through a pair of double doors.

The Chestnut meeting room contains a hearing induction loop.

1. Starting outside the main entrance to the visitor's centre facing the doors.
2. Enter the visitor centre, you will now be in the gift shop. The gift shop aisle circles a central block of merchandise. From your position follow the right-hand route straight along. This will lead you out of the gift shop to the cafe.
3. Having entered the cafe, take a sharp right. The lift to the upper floor is located inside a central pillar of the building and can be found directly right of the cafe entrance from the gift shop.
4. Further round the pillar is also a set of spiral stairs leading to the upper floor. There are 18 steps total, with 10 steps first, then a small landing followed by another 8 steps. The stairs have clear nosings and handrails present on both left and right sides.



5. Having taken the lift to the upper floor, the Chestnut meeting room is located directly ahead through a pair of double doors. Enter the Chestnut room.
6. Toilet B - One unisex accessible toilet located upstairs in the main visitor centre adjacent to the Chestnut meeting room. Second door on the left after entering the Chestnut room.



# Kent Country Parks

## Cafe

Our café is on the ground floor of the visitor centre and accessible through automatic double doors at the main entrance or via single manual doors next to the checkout. Seating is available both inside the visitor centre for customers using the café facilities as well as at picnic benches in the café outside seating area.

Some areas of the cafe inside can be narrow, or harder to navigate, especially at busy times. This may present some challenges to wheelchair users. The serving desk is 91cm tall and has no lip. Wheelchair users may wish to approach side-on.

The cafe checkout does not have an induction loop.

## Outdoor spaces

### Play area

There are 2 play areas in the park that can be reached by an easy access pathway.

### Main play area

The main play area is on level ground, with rubber safety surfacing and is surrounded by a fence but can be accessed through a level gateway. The main play area features easy access ramps, low level games on a rubber all-weather, impact absorbing surfacing to help prevent injuries while children are playing.



### AbilitySwing

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There is a wheelchair accessible AbilitySwing which will allow wheelchair users to use the swing in their wheelchair. There is a four point clamping system which secures the wheelchair in place and a harness that is opened by an access key (RADAR key). This can be asked for at reception.



## Roundabout suitable for wheelchairs

There is an accessible roundabout suitable for wheelchairs.



## Second play area

The other is on a small incline with a bark surface which makes the ground underfoot uneven.

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# Kent Country Parks

## Accessible routes

Shorne Woods has over 2 miles of easy access routes, ideal for wheelchair users and pushchairs.

The routes include gravel and hard standing pathways, with occasional slopes.

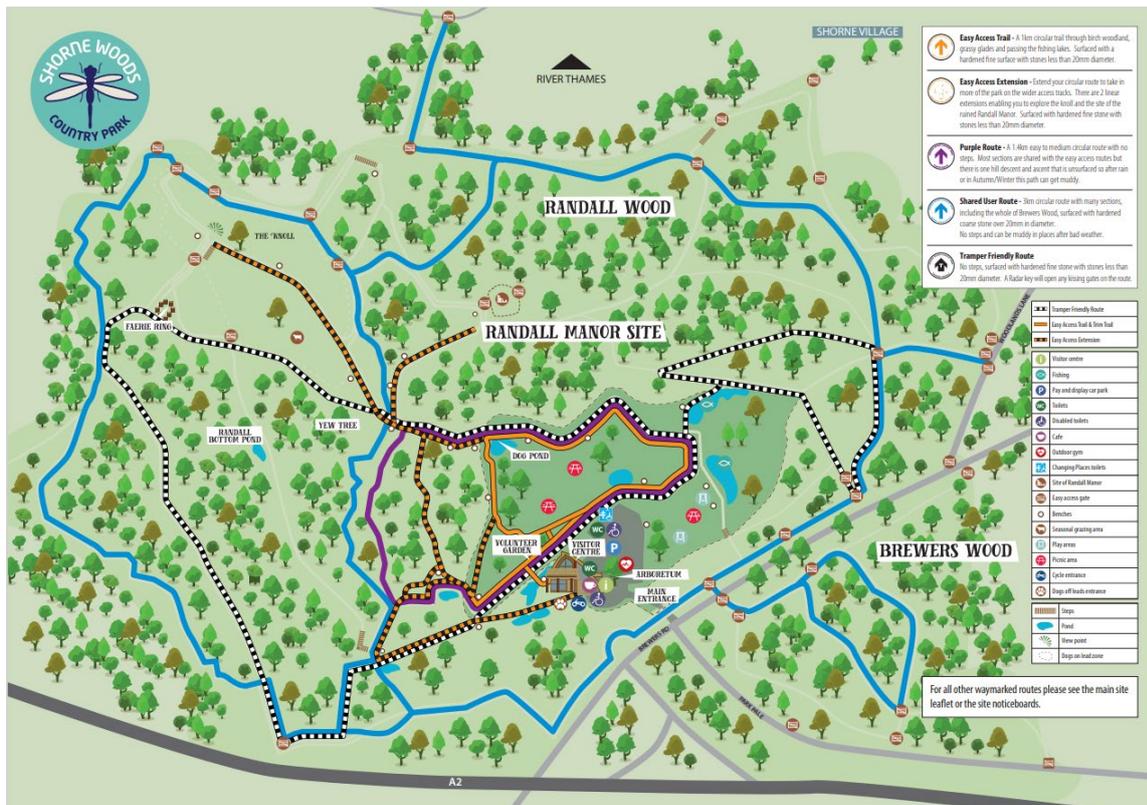


**Easy Access Trail** - a 1km circular trail through birch woodland, lakes, and grassy glades.

**Easy Access Extension** - Direct linear routes to the Knoll viewpoint and Randall Manor from the Easy Access Trail.



# Kent Country Parks



Seating is provided in all main locations for example the play area and Volunteer Garden, Visitors Centre, and picnic areas however it is limited on some of the walking routes.

- [Walking trails at Shorne Woods Country Park](#)
- [View a map of Shorne Woods Country Park \(PDF, 2.6 MB\).](#)

## Volunteer Garden

The volunteer garden contains a range of sculpture and plants to create a quiet and peaceful area for visitors to interact in a variety of sensory ways with the landscape. The plants and sculptures in the garden provide colour, fragrance, touch, shape, and sound. Some of the beds are specifically aimed at encouraging pollinators such as bees. The area includes benches and can be accessed from the Easy Access trail.

There are a mixture of wooden and stone sculptures offering a tactile experience as visitors can interact with the sculptures from all sides, feeling all sculpted detail. The heights of the sculptures are suitable for wheelchair users, and smaller children.

Plants available in the garden depend on the season, but offer further tactile and fragrance experiences that are distinct, but confined so that entering the sensory garden is not an overwhelming experience of competing sensory information.

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# Kent Country Parks

## Access

From the car park, head towards the Discovery Centre then turn right following the orange waymarker. Take the first turn on the left and continue to follow this winding path into the woodland. After the first bridge continues round to the left, following the orange waymarker. After another two bridges the path divides into two. Follow the path to the left over another bridge. Turn right into the Sensory Garden.





# Kent Country Parks



## Mobility Scooter Hire

4 Trampler mobility scooters are available for hire. Our Trampler's are rough terrain mobility vehicles that can help you explore more of Shorne Woods Country Park. To book, call us on 03000 41 47 47 or emailing [kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk).

It costs £2 for a 2-hour session.

Before hiring a Trampler for the first time, you will need to complete a 25 minute practical induction session to show you how to safely control the Trampler. You can pre-book your training session by calling 03000 41 47 47 or emailing [kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk)

You must be able to get on and off the Trampler unaided, as our staff are not trained to help with this.



## Toilets

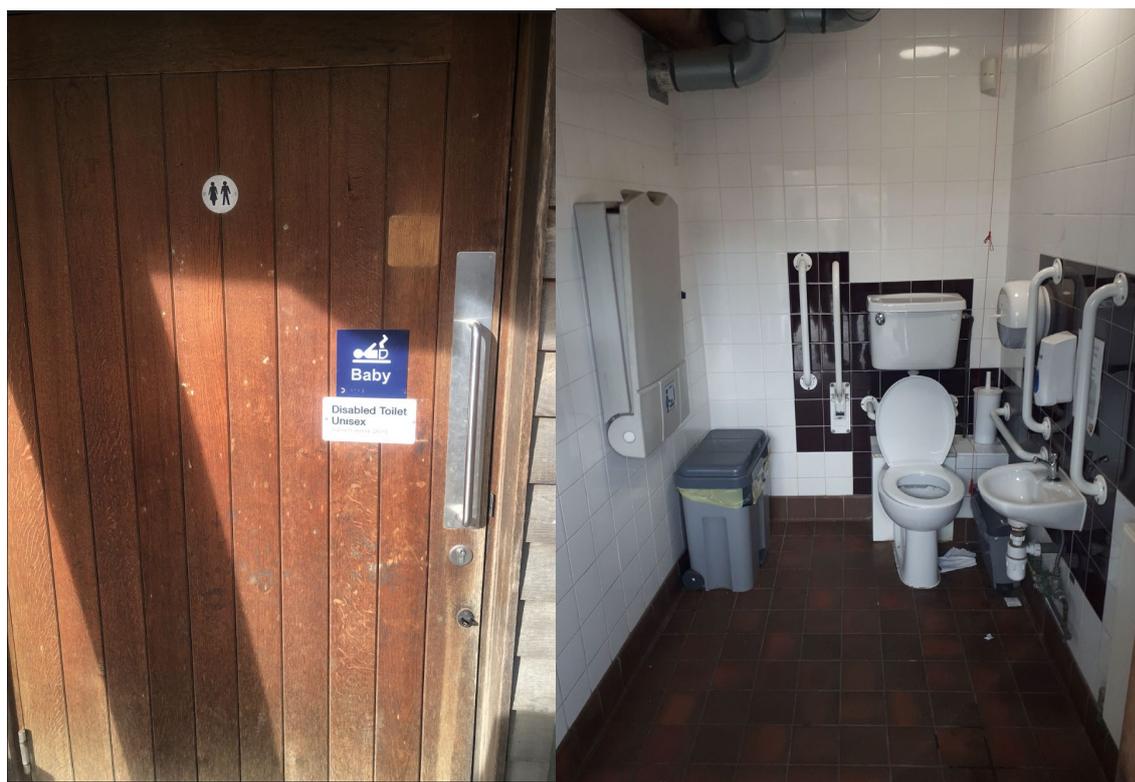
There are four accessible toilets across the country park situated in and around the main visitor centre.

- Toilet A - One unisex accessible toilet including a baby changing station located on the outside of the main visitor's centre which is open at all times. Left hand transfer.
- Toilet B - One unisex accessible toilet located upstairs in the main visitor centre adjacent to the Chestnut meeting room. Right hand transfer.
- Toilet C - One unisex accessible toilet in the toilet block serving the playground which is open at peak times. There is a separate baby changing station in this block. Right hand transfer.
- Toilet D - One Changing Places unisex accessible toilet also located in the toilet block serving the playground. This requires a RADAR key to access and includes hoist and full adult changing facilities. The toilet supports both left and right hand transfer.

Toilet facilities are available at all times when the park is open to visitors even if the cafe and shop are closed.

## Toilet A

1. Starting outside the main entrance to the visitor's centre facing the doors.
2. Turn left so you are now facing the concrete outdoor seating area for the cafe.
3. Walk along this outdoor seating area gently curving round to the right as it follows the curve of the visitor centre. Please be careful of wooden benches and other obstacles.
4. On your right hand side will be the glass full height windows of the cafe and regularly spaced wooden pillars which stand out several feet in front of the wall. There will first be a block of 5 pillars very close together, then a further 6 evenly spaced pillars you will have to pass to reach the toilets.
5. Once you have passed the cafe windows, the wall will change to brick. The accessible toilet is located on the right hand side on the outer wall of the visitors' centre.



## Toilet B

This toilet is for those who have hired the Chestnut meeting room

1. Starting outside the main entrance to the visitor's centre facing the doors.
2. Enter the visitor centre, you will now be in the gift shop. The gift shop aisle circles a central block of merchandise. From your position follow the right-hand route straight along. This will lead you out of the gift shop to the cafe.
3. Having entered the cafe, take a sharp right. The lift to the upper floor is located inside a central pillar of the building and can be found directly right of the cafe entrance from the gift shop.

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4. Having taken the lift to the upper floor, the Chestnut meeting room is located directly ahead through a pair of double doors. Enter the Chestnut room.
5. The accessible toilet is the second door located on the left hand side after entering the room.



## Toilet C

1. Starting outside the main entrance to the visitor's centre facing the doors.
2. Turn right and follow the path along till you reach a crossroad.
3. Turn right at the crossroads and follow the path along. It is a straight path but about halfway along there is a short kink where you will have to turn left then right to continue. This path runs along one edge of the car park.

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4. At the end of the path turn left, you will have reached the toilet block.
5. The accessible toilet is located on the left-hand side.



## Toilet D - Changing Places

The Changing Places toilet is located next to the kiosk block on the far side of the car park and is accessed via a RADAR key.

1. Starting outside the main entrance to the visitor's centre facing the door
2. Turn right and follow the path along till you reach a crossroads.
3. Turn right at the crossroads and follow the path along. It is a straight path but about halfway along there is a short kink where you will have to turn left then right to continue. This path runs along one edge of the car park.
4. At the end of the path, turn left. You will have reached the toilet block.
5. The Changing Places accessible toilet is located on the left-hand side and requires a RADAR key to access.

Facility Features include: Bench Height Adjustable, Adult Sized, Wall Mounted - Hoist - Ceiling, Loop - Peninsular Toilet Washbasin Height Adjustable, Non Slip Floor 12sq m Privacy Screen, Paper Roll, Colostomy Shelf, Unisex Signage in the room.



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## Fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures

Standard evac procedures include provision for disabled visitors. Lifts will not be in use. If visitors are in the Chestnut Room on the upper floor there is also an evac chair.

All Kent Country parks have muster point locations at each site which will be suitable for all visitors.

All internal fire alarms are audible, no flashing lights.

## Assistance dog facilities

Assistance dog exercise facilities - dog friendly areas where dogs can be let off their lead which are visibly signposted at the parks. At Shorne Woods there is also a pond where dog swimming is allowed and is signposted from the picnic area.

Other assistance dog facilities - water bowls for assistance dogs. There is a tap for dog drinking water and bowls by the cafe.



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