



## Access Guide to Peel Castle 2019

Manx National Heritage recognises that historic properties can present difficulties for people with disabilities. We have prepared an access guides for Peel Castle on St Patrick's Isle to help you plan your visit. This access guide does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with access needs, but aims to accurately describe the historic outdoor environment at the site.

### Introduction

Set on St Patrick's Isle and overlooking Peel Harbour is the Island's majestic fortress, Peel Castle. Within its magnificent walls you will find layer upon layer of Manx History. Peel Castle was originally a place of worship before becoming the fortress of Magnus Barefoot, 11<sup>th</sup> century Viking King of Mann. A visit to Peel Castle provides opportunities to explore St Patrick's Church and the Round Tower which date back to the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries and the atmospheric crypt of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Cathedral of St German. Visitors can also explore the Castle's extensive grounds and enjoy the stunning views of Peel and beyond.

Peel Castle is an archaeological site, comprising the remains of buildings from various time periods. It is an entirely open air site situated on St Patrick's Isle, which is accessed by a road causeway. There are 24 historic steps to reach the pay barrier and there is no alternative means of access. Once inside there are a network of uneven paths to explore over rough ground. Please see the mobility impairment section for more detailed information.

Peel Castle has an admission fee and various concessions are available. Please see our website for up-to-date information [www.manxnationalheritage.im](http://www.manxnationalheritage.im) or call Peel Castle on 01624 843232 or nearby House of Manannan on 648090 to chat through our admission options with our helpful staff. Our annual pass for Island residents and holiday passes can be purchased online prior to visiting. It is our policy that carers accompanying a disabled visitor are admitted free of charge to all our sites.

Peel Castle is open seasonally seven days a week from 10am – 4pm in low season (30 March to 25 May/ 3 September to 4 November 2018) and 10am – 5pm during high season (26 May - 2 September 2018). Please see our website for further details.

There is a small gift kiosk at the pay barrier. There are no refreshment facilities on site, but the shop does sell soft drinks and sweet snacks. Picnics are encouraged on site.

There is a male and female toilet on site, this is accessed by a number of historic steps. There is no accessible toilet on site. Please note there are no baby changing facilities on site.

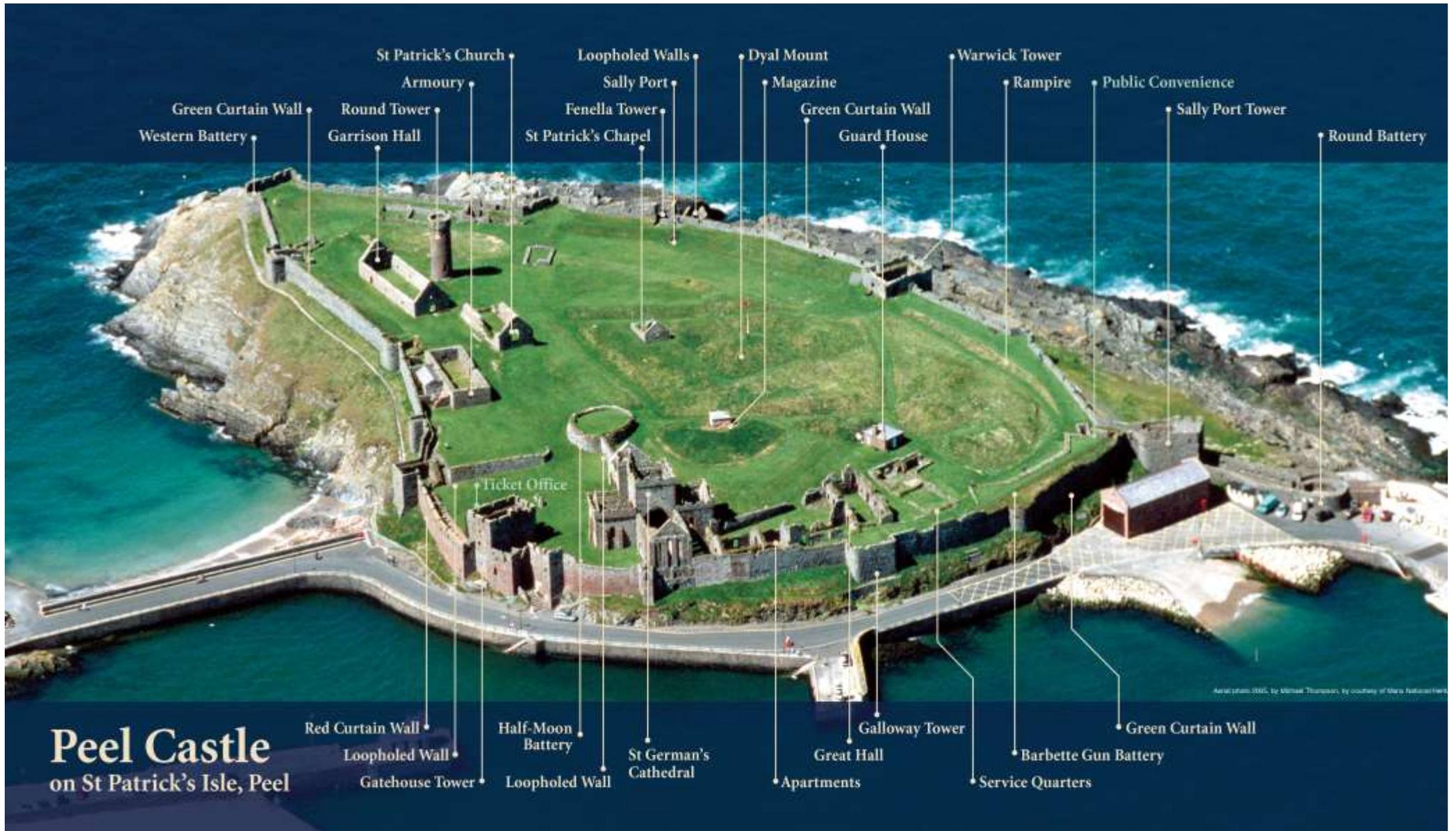
We look forward to welcoming you.



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## 1 Getting to Peel Castle

Peel Castle is located on St Patrick's Isle, a small islet connected to the town of Peel via a road causeway. It is an open air site.



**Peel Castle on St Patrick's Isle**



**St German's Cathedral, part of the Peel Castle site**

### **By car:**

There is a public car park at Fenella Beach, approximately 100 metres from the entrance to Peel Castle. There are no marked disabled parking spaces. The car park surface is tarmacked. There is additional parking on Peel breakwater.



**Fenella Beach Public Car Park**

**On foot:**

Peel Castle and St Patrick's Isle is situated on the West Quay in Peel and is on level ground. Peel Castle can be approached by the harbour swing bridge near to Peel Beach (5 minute walk from centre of Peel), or by walking around the harbour (approximately 10-15 minute walk from the centre of Peel). Please note that Peel is an old fishing town and many of the streets and pavements are uneven.

**By bus:**

Journey time from Douglas to Peel takes approximately 25 minutes. Peel Bus Station is situated about 10-15 minute walk from Peel Castle.

**By coach:**

Coach operators can drop visitors directly at the entrance to the site and can park in the nearby House of Manannan car park. Coach operators should make visitors aware in advance of their visit that Peel Castle is an entirely open air site. There are 24 historic steps to reach the pay barrier and a network of uneven paths to explore once inside.



## 2 Entrance Area

Access to Peel Castle is through climbing 24 historic steps to the ticket office. The route has a partial hand rail. There is no alternative entrance point to the castle.



**Stairwell leading to Peel Castle**

The ticket office has a medium height counter. There is an induction hearing loop fitted. The ticket office is staffed at all time, and our team are happy to help. There are no cloak room facilities at Peel Castle, although bulky bags and prams can be left at the ticket office if space allows.



**Ticket Office**

All well behaved dogs on a short lead are welcome on site and a water bowl is available at the entrance kiosk, please ask. We ask that you clean up after your dog and take all mess away with you. There are no dog bins on site.



### **3 Access for Disabled Visitors**

Peel Castle offers a warm welcome to all.

Visitors with specific needs are welcome to contact Manx National Heritage in advance of their visit and descriptive guided tours can be arranged. Please contact Katie King on 01624 648035 or email [katie.king@mnh.im](mailto:katie.king@mnh.im) to talk about your requirements.

Assistance dogs are welcome and a water bowl is available at the entrance kiosk, please ask.

#### **Visitors with Mobility Impairment**

Peel Castle is an entirely open air site situated on St Patrick's Isle, which is accessed by a road causeway. There are 24 historic steps to reach the pay barrier and a network of uneven grass paths to explore once inside. There is no alternative means to access Peel Castle for visitors with mobility impairment. There are benches around the site.

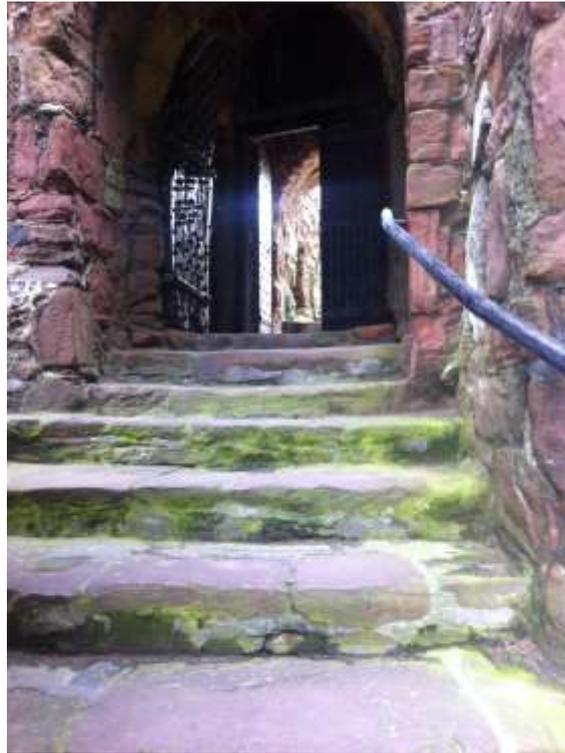
Manx National Heritage also operates the House of Manannan, just across the harbour from Peel Castle. This has a gallery which explores the history of Peel Castle and St Patrick's Isle and is fully accessible – please see our website for more details

#### **Peel Castle Site**

The entrance way to Peel Castle is via 24 historic steps with a partial handrail. They are made of sandstone and are uneven, varying in depth throughout.



**Stairwell leading to Peel Castle**



**Stairwell leading to Peel Castle**

Once inside Peel Castle there are various pathways and routes to explore the site. The routes are uneven and there are slopes and steep inclines. There are historic ruins around the site, with steps, stairs and narrow passageways. There are no handrails throughout the site or any set route to follow.

Please note the Castle's historic steps vary in size and can become slippery when wet or when the weather is damp. The grassed paths can also become slippery.

Please see photographs below showing the historic environment within Peel Castle.



**Stairwells leading from ticket office**



**Sloped route to St German's Cathedral**



**Inside St German's Cathedral – stepped access in and out**



**Alternative sloped route to explore Peel Castle buildings**



**Grassed pathway around curtain wall**



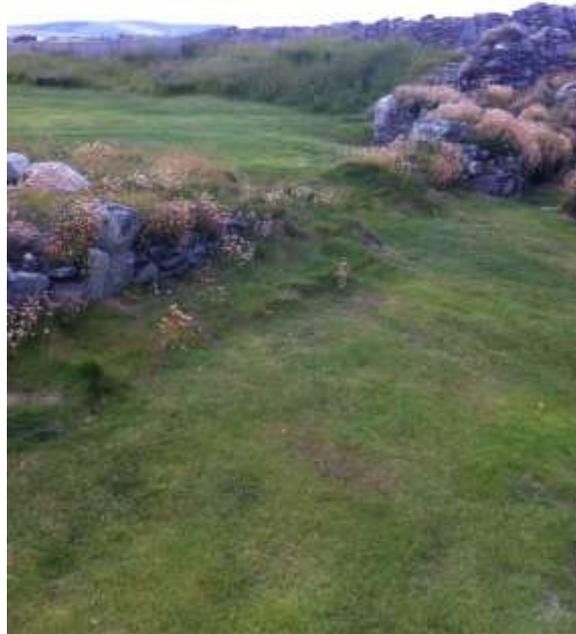
**Grassed pathway through site**



**Showing steep incline of some grassed pathways throughout site**



**Flat grassed area**



**Example of archaeological building remains on site**



**Example of stepped access into building remains**



**Steep irregular steps leading to the Crypt with partial hand rail**



**Alternative steep irregular steps leading to the Crypt with partial hand rail**



## **Visitors with Learning Difficulties**

Peel Castle is a fascinating place to explore – with archaeological ruins, thousands of years of history to explore, spectacular sea views and fascinating natural history as well. There is no set route to follow through the Castle, so visitors are able to set their own pace and follow their own interests. There is an audio guide available for visitors (see section below).

We can offer familiarisation tours for visitors with learning difficulties to help them explore the site. Please contact Katie King on 01624 648035 or email [katie.king@mnh.im](mailto:katie.king@mnh.im) to talk about your requirements.

## **Visitors with Visual Impairment**

Peel Castle is an entirely open air site. There are 24 historic steps to reach the pay barrier and a network of uneven paths to explore once inside. The steps to the Castle are irregular in size. There is a handrail.

Once inside Peel Castle there are various pathways and routes to explore the site. The routes are uneven and there are slopes and steep inclines. There are historic ruins around the site, with steps, stairs and narrow passageways. Please see photographs in the mobility section showing the historic environment within Peel Castle.

Please note the Castle's historic steps vary in size and can become slippery when wet or when the weather is damp. The grassed paths can also become slippery. There are no handrails throughout the site or any set route to follow. Owing to these issues, visually impaired visitors may find it helpful to have a companion with them to explore Peel Castle.

There is an audio guide available at Peel Castle.

Alternatively we can offer an accompanied tour for visitors. This must be booked in advance. Please contact Katie King on 01624 648035 or email [katie.king@gov.im](mailto:katie.king@gov.im) in advance of your visit to talk about your requirements.

## **Visitors with Hearing Impairment**

There is a hearing induction loop at the entrance kiosk.

There is a portable hearing loop which can be borrowed alongside the audio guide. This is a trial for the 2018/2019 season and we would appreciate your feedback.

A guide book to the site is available to purchase at the entrance kiosk, and a laminated map can be borrowed to aid orientation around the site. In addition there is a map within this Access Guide. See page 4.

Assistance dogs are welcome and a water bowl is available at reception, please ask.



## 4 Peel Castle Audio Guide

There is a Peel Castle audio guide available for visitors at the entrance kiosk. This helps to tell the story of Peel Castle. The staff on site will show you how to use the audio guides.

There is also a portable hearing loop which can be borrowed alongside the audio guide. This is a trial for the 2018/2019 season and we would appreciate your feedback



**Audio Guide Handset**



**Audio guide point along curtain wall path**



## **5 Young Children**

Young children are very welcome at Peel Castle and are encouraged to explore and have fun. Intrepid explorers can investigate the Castle's crypt or imagine life as a garrison soldier on patrol along the curtain walls. Parents should note that all historic outdoor sites can be hazardous and children should be supervised at all times.

Peel Castle is the perfect place to enjoy a family picnic whilst taking in the breathtaking sea views. Just be careful the seagulls don't steal your sandwiches. We have benches positioned around the sites. We politely ask that you take all rubbish away with you.

All Manx National Heritage sites supports and welcomes breastfeeding mothers.

There are no baby changing facilities on site. The nearest facilities are at Peel Breakwater toilets, about 50 metres from the main entrance.

## **6 Refreshments**

Water can be purchased from the entrance kiosk. Picnics are encouraged on site. There are many eateries in Peel. The nearest is the Peel Breakwater Kiosk, situated 50 metres from the main entrance.



## 7 Toilets

There are both male and female toilets on site. The toilets are reached by walking along a grass and stone path then descending a flight of 8 uneven steps with no hand rail, walking through a short narrow tunnel (watch your head) and ascending a second flight of 7 steps with a handrail. (See map for directions to toilets).

There are no baby changing facilities on site.

Please note there is no accessible toilet on site. The nearest accessible public toilet is at Peel Breakwater, near the Food Kiosk.



**Entrance to toilet block**



**Stairwells to reach male and female toilets**



## 8 Future Plans

The Peel Castle team receive customer service and equality awareness training and are always happy to help. We work with a range of partners across the Island to ensure our sites and collections are accessible, engaging and inspiring to a broad range of user. We are always seeking to improve our services for visitors and appreciate your feedback.

Manx National Heritage is committed to improving access to heritage assets for everybody; and is working to embed an inclusive 'access for all' philosophy across the organisation and in everything we do.

If you would like to speak to a member of our team about visiting Peel Castle or any other Manx National Heritage site please contact our inclusion champion, Katie King at [katie.king@mnh.im](mailto:katie.king@mnh.im) or 01624 648035.

## Contact Information

<b>Address:</b>	Peel Castle, Peel
<b>Telephone:</b>	01624 843232 or 01624 648090 (House of Manannan)
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.manxnationalheritage.im">www.manxnationalheritage.im</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:enquiries@mnh.gov.im">enquiries@mnh.gov.im</a>
<b>Opening hours:</b>	<p><b>Monday - Sunday</b> Open: 10am – 4pm (low season) 10am – 5pm (high season)</p> <p>Closed: November - Easter</p>