Access Guide for the Manx Museum

This access guide 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 visitors.

Introduction

The Manx Museum is the national museum for the Isle of Man and is the headquarters of Manx National Heritage. The Manx Museum is bursting with artefacts and treasures unique to the Isle of Man. The Island’s history is presented through film, galleries, and interactive displays. It houses the National Art Gallery, the National Library and Archive and also has a gift shop and café.

The Manx Museum is the perfect starting point to learn about the history of the Island and has a vibrant programme of temporary exhibitions and events.

The Manx Museum is free to visit and is currently open seven days a week. It is open all year round. Please see our website for up-to-date information www.manxnationalheritage.im.

The museum is based in a Victorian building with a modern extension housing a lecture theatre, education suite and seminar room. The galleries are spread over two floors, with the majority being on the ground level. There are a number of steps and stairs throughout the building, all have lifts or ramp access (with the exception of the archaeology reference gallery which is accessed by 13 steps).

We have a unisex accessible toilet near to the main entrance and an accessible cubicle in the female and male toilets near the shop. There are baby changing facilities in each of these areas as well. The Manx Museum also has a publicly accessible Changing Place facility.

We welcome all visitors, and our helpful front of house team will be happy to assist you during your visit. Please speak to the team member on reception if you require assistance or would like details of museum events or activities.

This statement lists the range of provisions we have made to ensure that every visitor has a great time when they visit us.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance, please email enquiries@mnh.im.
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1 Getting to the Manx Museum

The Manx Museum is located in central Douglas at the top of a steep hill (Crellin’s Hill).

Map Showing the Location of the Manx Museum
By car:

The museum has a small car park which is free to access. The museum has three designated disabled parking spaces opposite the entrance. There is a dropped curb.

When the car park is full visitors are welcome to use the car park as a drop-off and collection point. The car park only has one entrance/exit, there is a small turning area at the bottom of the car park.

![Disabled Parking Bays in the Museum Car Park](image)

Visitors can park on the roads/streets surrounding the museum, **most** of which are within Douglas’ two-hour parking disc zone (meaning cars must be moved every two hours). Please check how long you are permitted to park in the zone you have chosen on surrounding signs.

Disabled badge holders can generally park in disc zones for double the amount of time (i.e., if it is a two-hour zone, blue badge holders can park for up to four hours), and a parking disc must be displayed. Please check how long you are permitted to park in the zone you have chosen.

The disc zone is not operational at the weekends. Parking discs can be collected from any IOM Post Office, the Welcome Centre at the Sea Terminal or at the Manx Museum reception.

Alternative parking is available at nearby Chester Street Car Park, with access to the museum via a pedestrian footbridge. The payment machine accepts coins and cards. Disabled badge holders can park in Chester Street Car Park for one hour extra free parking allowed after permitted time (i.e. paying for 2 hours parking provides 3 hours to blue badge holders). For more information: [https://www.gov.im/categories/travel-traffic-and-motoring/parking-and-parking-permits/car-parks/](https://www.gov.im/categories/travel-traffic-and-motoring/parking-and-parking-permits/car-parks/).
On foot:

The museum is situated on a steep hill from central Douglas, it can be reached by lift from the main shopping street at Chester Street Car Park and through crossing over a pedestrian footbridge. The route is wheelchair and buggy accessible, but there is a steep incline from the footbridge through the museum car park.

By bus:

Douglas Bus Station is a 10-15 minute walk from the Manx Museum, please walk through the main shopping street (Strand Street) and the museum can be reached by lift access from Chester Street Car Park and crossing over the footbridge. The route is wheelchair and buggy accessible, but there is a steep incline from the footbridge through the museum car park.

By coach:

There is a designated coach parking bay at the bottom of Crellin’s Hill, on Finch Road. Please note there is a steep hill to reach the Manx Museum from the drop off point. Coach visitors might prefer to use the lift in nearby Chester Street Car Park to reach the Museum.
2 Entrance Area

Access to the main museum is through one set of automated glass doors. The main entrance is completely level.

![Manx Museum Entrance – Showing Automated Doors](image1)

The main entrance has a medium height counter and is well lit. There is an induction hearing loop fitted.

![Manx Museum Reception Area](image2)
Torches and ear defenders are available to borrow from reception for those who require them.

We have a wheelchair available to borrow while you visit – just ask when you arrive or call ahead to pre book.

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

**Cloak Room Facilities**

The Manx Museum does not have a dedicated cloakroom, but visitors are welcome to leave their coats or bags in the hanging area next to the lecture theatre. Items are left at visitors’ own risk. There are also some small lockers in this area.

Please speak to the team member stationed at the reception desk if you would like to use this facility or would like to leave bulkier items.
3 Museum Galleries for Disabled Visitors

The Manx Museum is free to visit and offers a warm welcome to all.

The Manx Museum has free Wi-Fi.

Visitors with specific needs are welcome to contact the museum team in advance of their visit and descriptive guided tours can be arranged. To discuss your requirements please email enquiries@mnh.im

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

We have a dedicated quiet room off the Natural History Gallery for any visitors who need a break.

Visitors who use Wheelchairs or have Limited Mobility

Access to the main entrance to the museum is level and we have a medium level counter at reception.

From reception there is a push button power assisted door leading to the MUSEUM 100 exhibition. There is another power assisted door from the gallery to the rest of the galleries.

Entrance to MUSEUM 100 from Reception – showing push power assist doors and button
Entrance to main museum galleries from MUSEUM 100 – showing push button power assist doors

There is full wheelchair access throughout the main galleries, with lifts and ramps available at level changes.

We have a wheelchair available to borrow while you visit – just ask when you arrive or phone ahead to pre book.

There is seating available in most of the museum galleries.

Please find full details of the museum gallery level changes below:
Level Changes (Main Museum)

Lift to café, exhibition space, TT gallery & aid access to the library

To access the café (currently closed until further notice), exhibition space, TT gallery and to aid access to the library reading room - there are four steps with handrails. There is a lift to the right of the steps which is opposite the male toilets. The lift is 140 x 108cm, with a 400kg capacity (4 people).

Images showing the steps leading up to the exhibition space, café and towards the library – alongside the lift which also goes down to the TT gallery

There is also a platform lift to the rear of the exhibition space, accessed via the social history galleries, providing access to the exhibition gallery and the café. The platform lift is 80 x 100cm and has the capacity to hold one visitor using a wheelchair. If the exhibition gallery which leads to the café and library is closed due to exhibition changeovers, please speak to a member of the front of house team who will open the gallery for you to enable access to the café/library.

Library Reading Room Lift

From this level the library reading room is accessed via five steps leading down with handrails. There is a platform lift to access the reading room, a member of the front of house team is needed to operate this lift and will be happy to assist visitors. The lift is 80cm
x 100cm and has capacity for one visitor using a wheelchair or one person on the fold down seat.

Images showing the platform Library Lift aiding access down the stairs to the library

Lift from Social History Galleries

There is a further lift which can be accessed via the social history galleries. It provides access to the TT Gallery and has a capacity of 400kg (4 people).

Image showing lift to TT Gallery Accessed via the social history galleries
Visitors who are Blind, Partially Blind or have Sight Loss

Lighting levels in the museum galleries are low and floor surface finishes vary. The main museum galleries on the ground floor are level and the TT gallery can be accessed via a lift.

Visitors with specific needs are welcome to contact the museum team in advance of their visit to request a descriptive guided tour. Please email enquiries@mnh.im.

Our library and reading room have large screen computer monitors, free Wi-Fi access and Pebble readers to aid with magnification of documents.

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

We have a dedicated quiet room off the Natural History Gallery for any visitors who need a break.

Visitors who are Deaf or have Hearing Loss

Our main reception area, shop counter and library reading room counter have an induction loop. The hearing induction loop requires your hearing aid to be set to T.

There is written interpretation in all galleries.

Visitors with specific needs are welcome to contact the museum team in advance of their visit to request a guided tour. Please email enquiries@mnh.im.

A number of our AV films in the museum galleries are subtitled.

Transcripts for all our films are available at reception, with a set next to each film as well.

For those with hypersensitive hearing we can offer ear defenders - please just ask when you arrive if you would like to borrow a pair.

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

We have a dedicated quiet room off the Natural History Gallery for any visitors who need a break. We hope you enjoy the soft sofa and soft lighting.
Visitors who have Learning or Sensory Difficulties

Sound, film, and light are used in the museum galleries as an interpretative tool and to create atmosphere. We also display a wide range of artefacts – from Viking swords to taxidermy specimens. During term time the museum can become busy with school visits; and during the school holidays can be busy with family visits. There are also a large number of coach visitors from April to September. This all means the galleries can become noisy and disorientating, which some visitors may find challenging.

When planning your visit, the front of house team would be happy to advise whether the museum has any large pre-booked groups; and during your visit can suggest quieter galleries and spaces.

Torches and ear defenders can be borrowed from reception for visitors with sensory difficulties.

Manx National Heritage is a member of the sunflower lanyard scheme, and any members of the team are always happy to help.

We can also offer familiarisation tours for visitors with sensory needs during quieter times, so they feel more confident to revisit. Please email enquiries@mnh.im.

We have a dedicated quiet room off the Natural History Gallery for any visitors who need a break. We hope you enjoy the soft sofa and soft lighting.
**SEN Resources at the Manx Museum**

We have specific resources at the Manx Museum for visitors with SEN (Special Educational Needs) and their families. These include sensory fidget backpacks, which can be collected from the reception desk at the Manx Museum. We have also created a visual story to help you plan your visit to the Manx Museum, which can be found on our website in the Accessibility section.

We would be delighted to hear your feedback and experiences using these resources, or to discover what more we can do to help you enjoy your visit.

**Sensory Fidget Backpacks**

The backpack contains:
- Hand puppet
- Magnifying glass
- Rainbow fidget toy
- Ear defenders
- Sand timer (10 minutes)
- Tactile balls
- Wind up torch
- Sensory gel timer
4 Young Children

Young children are very welcome at the Manx Museum. Children are invited to make noise, play, and have fun in the galleries. The Exploratorium gallery has been specifically designed to encourage play.

To protect our collections food and drink are not allowed in the galleries. We have an outdoor picnic area at the rear of the car park with benches and great views of the sea.

The Manx Museum supports and welcomes breastfeeding mothers.

The dedicated quiet room off the Natural History Gallery can be used by any visitors who wish to take a break from the galleries.

There is full pram access throughout the building, with lifts and ramps available at all level changes.

There are no designated pram parks, but if you would like to leave your pram, please speak to the reception team and they will advise whether space is available in our reception area.

Changing facilities are available in the unisex accessible toilet in the main reception area and in the female and male toilet block near the gift shop and café.

Torches and ear defenders are available to borrow from reception for those who require them.

Quiet Room with sofa and sensory lighting options
5 Toilets

Ground Floor Facilities:

Accessible Unisex Toilet

The Manx Museum has one unisex accessible toilet to the right of the main entrance and further accessible cubicles with the female and male toilets on the ground floor near to the café and shop.

A standard accessible toilet with:
- Outward opening door
- Left hand transfer space with drop down rail
- Fixed handrails to right side of the toilet
- Vertical handrail to right side of basin
- Low level basin with lever tap
- Paper towel dispenser
- Automatic soap dispenser
- Emergency pull cord
- Full length mirror
- Good overhead lighting (automatic on/off)
- Wall hanging changing mat for young children
**Female Toilets with Accessible Cubicle**

The female toilets near the shop include a wheelchair accessible cubicle and changing facilities for young children.

The cubicle door opens outwards. The cubicle comprises a standard accessible toilet with:

- Left hand transfer space with double drop down rails
- Fixed handrails to right side of the toilet
- Vertical handrail to right side of basin
- Low level basin with automatic taps
- Emergency pull cord
- Low level mirror
- Low level hand drier
- Good overhead lighting (automatic on/off)
- Wall hanging changing mat and baby/toddler seat for young children.

![Accessible Cubicle in the Ladies Toilets](image)

The female toilet block has a hand drier and no paper towels.

**The hand drier is very loud.**
Please note access to the female toilet block is through a standard sized doorway with two sets of inward opening doors. Wheelchair users may require assistance to enter and exit the toilet block (see images below).

Accessible Cubicle in the Ladies Toilets (showing two door entry)
Male Toilets with Accessible Cubicle

The men’s toilets near the café/shop include a wheelchair accessible cubicle and changing facilities for young children. The toilet is accessed through an inward opening door. It is not power assisted.

The cubicle door opens inwards. The cubicle comprises a standard accessible toilet with:
- Right hand transfer space with double drop-down rails
- Fixed handrails to left side of the toilet
- Vertical handrails above basin
- Low level basin with lever tap
- Emergency pull cord
- Mirror on rear of door
- Good overhead lighting (automatic on/off)
- Wall hanging changing mat
- Sliding lock

Please note the male toilet block has a hand drier and no paper towels.

The hand drier is very loud.
First Floor Facilities:

There are further toilets on the first floor above the main museum entrance. There are 18 steps to access the first floor and there is no lift access. There are no accessible toilets or changing facilities on this level.

Second Floor Facilities:

There are further toilets on the second floor above the main museum entrance for users of the seminar room facilities. There are 36 steps to access the second floor from ground level. There is lift access which requires a member of staff to operate. There are no accessible toilets or changing facilities on this level.
Changing Place Facility:

The Manx Museum has the Isle of Man’s first publicly accessible Changing Place toilet, which offers safe and clean toilet facilities for people with multiple and complex disabilities.

The facility provides:

- A sizeable changing room for disabled people and carers
- Height adjustable changing bench
- Overhead powered track hoist (please note all users are required to bring their own sling)
- Adjustable washbasin
- Centrally placed toilet with room either side to maneuver

Designed with the input of the Changing Places Consortium, disabled people, and their carers, the facility helps people with complex needs stay out longer in the Isle of Man’s capital, visit the Manx Museum, and enjoy the surrounding area.

Please see the images on the next page.
Changing Place Facility
6 Library & Archives Reading Room

The Library & Archives Reading Room at the seaward end of the Manx Museum is accessed from the ground level by ascending four steps and descending five stairs, with handrails. There are two platform lifts to aid users (please see the mobility section for more information). Please ask a member of museum staff for assistance as needed.

The Reading Room team provide a means of accessing information about the Isle of Man, its history and culture, held in formats such as books, photographs, manuscripts, audio, video, posters, prints and maps. Family history research and many other subjects can be investigated, complemented by our online presence at www.imuseum.im. Our friendly and informative staff will be happy to discuss your research requirements. The Reading Room is a reference only facility with no borrowing allowed.

Reading Room users need to register on their first visit and provide proof of identity showing your current address. Our staff are happy to help users complete the registration process.

The Library & Archives reading Room is open Wednesday – Saturday 10am – 4.30pm.
The library reading room is approximately 100 metres from the main level entrance, or 20 metres from the stepped Victorian entrance.

There is a set of coin operated lockers for users to leave their bags and valuables.

Food and drink are not permitted in the Reading Room.

There is plenty of room for wheelchair movement. Tables and chairs can be moved.

Lighting in the Reading Room is good natural daylight with additional overhead lighting.

There is a hearing induction loop at the low-level counter.

There is a Perspex screen affixed to the library counter.

A pebble magnifier is available to borrow from the counter, please ask the staff.

Our Reading Room has large screen computer monitors, laptops, and free Wi-Fi access. Users are welcome to use their own laptops/tablets.

Headphones are available to use within the Reading Room.

Assistant dogs are welcome, there is a water bowl at the main museum reception.
7  Bay Room Café

Please note that the Bay Room Café is currently closed until further notice.

Our café is accessed from ground level by four steps with hand rails. There is also a lift.

Tables and chairs can be moved.

Crockery is white and contrasts strongly with the wooden tables.

Lighting in the café is good natural daylight with additional overhead lighting.

The doors are kept open and are wide enough for easy wheelchair and buggy access.

Free Wi-Fi access is available for customers.

In our café you will find pastries and lunch items such as soup. The café team can provide allergen information on all dishes. If you have special dietary requirements, please speak to the café team or call ahead on 01624 648058.

The café is table service, and reservations can be made in advance.

If you would like your baby food or milk heating up, please ask the café team who are happy to help. The Bay Room café supports and welcomes breastfeeding mothers.
8    Gift Shop

Our Gift Shop is located on the ground floor and can be accessed on the level from the main entrance or via a set of ten steps with handrail and revolving door from the Victorian entrance way.

The Gift Shop allows easy access for visitors using wheelchairs and buggies and has a low counter.

There is a hearing induction loop at the shop counter.

There is a Perspex screen affixed to the counter.

There are tall display racks and low tables accessible from a seated position.

Lighting in the shop is natural daylight with additional overhead lighting.

Our friendly team are happy to help, so please ask if you require assistance.
9 Education and Conference Suites

The Manx Museum has a lecture theatre and two seminar rooms. They are used by school groups and are available for private hire.

Lecture Theatre

Entrance to the lecture theatre is completely level and through a wide doorway. The door is not automated.

Seating in the lecture theatre is self-folding cinema style seats. The front row seats are stand-alone chairs, which can be removed to accommodate visitors using wheelchairs. Seats further back are accessed via a deep flight of steps, with colour contrast trims.

There is floor space for visitors using wheelchairs and buggies.

There is Wi-Fi access.

There is no induction loop in the theatre.

The lighting level in the lecture theatre is low.

The ‘Story of Mann’ film which is shown in the theatre every 30 minutes is not subtitled.

Access to the stage / lectern is via two steps. There is no ramped access.
**Seminar Room**

The seminar room is on the second floor of the museum building, above the entrance area. There are 36 steps with handrails to access the second floor from ground level.

There is a large service lift to take visitors to the second floor, which requires a member of staff to operate. Please speak to a front of house team member at the reception desk.

There is a phone in the seminar room. If you require assistance or need to use the lift, please lift the receiver and press ‘0’ to be put through to the reception team.

The seminar room has wide doorways and moveable tables and chairs. There is plenty of space for wheelchair movement.

There is an induction loop.

Lighting in the seminar rooms is good natural daylight with additional overhead lighting.

There are toilets on the second-floor level. There are no accessible toilets or changing facilities on this level.

There are cloakroom facilities in the toilet block.

There is a small kitchen facility on this level.

There is Wi-Fi access.

To enquire about hiring the lecture theatre or seminar rooms please email: venuehire@mnh.gov.im.
10 Future Plans

The Manx Museum front of house team receive customer service and equality awareness training and are always happy to help. Manx National Heritage 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 users.

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 discuss access and inclusion in more detail please contact Access & Inclusion Champions Katie King on 01624 648023, katie.king@mnh.im, or Suzie Walker on 01624 648091, suzanne.walker@mnh.im.

If you would like to speak to a member of our team about visiting the Manx Museum or any other Manx National Heritage site please contact enquiries@mnh.im.

Contact Information

Address: Manx National Heritage, Manx Museum
Kingswood Grove, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 3LY

Telephone: 01624 648000

Website: www.manxnationalheritage.im

Email: enquiries@mnh.im

Opening hours: Monday – Sunday, 9.30am – 4.30pm