



Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

Accessibility Guide

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 visitors.

Introduction

The Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (SOFO) is located on the same site as The Oxfordshire Museum (TOM) on Park Street, Woodstock. The museum is working towards Museum Accreditation and is a member of VAQAS (Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme/VisitEngland). The museum offers disabled access throughout including a disabled access toilet and lift. The lift allows access to the first floor Research Centre which is not typically open to the general public, but may be used for viewing a number of paintings mounted on the walls around the staircase. Printed handbooks are also available on site which feature images of these paintings with descriptions.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please call 01993 810 210 or email us at frontofhouse@sofo.org.uk

Pre Arrival

Getting Here

By car: via A44 Oxford to Evesham. Please use postcode OX20 1SN for your sat-nav.

By bus: S3 and 500 from Oxford city centre (and Oxford train station) or 233 from Witney. For bus time tables see www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk

By train: The nearest train station is located in Long Hanborough which is 4.1 miles away.

By taxi: Contacts for local accessible taxi services below (others are available).

001 Taxis: 01865 240000 ABC Radio Taxis: 01865 770077

By bicycle: Bicycle racks are located in Park Street.

Car Parking and Arrival at The Oxfordshire Museum (TOM) on Park Street

- There is on-street parking in the town and 4 disabled access parking spaces within 100 yards of the main entrance.
- A FREE public car park is a short walk away (approximately 10 minutes) in Hensington Road.

- The pavements from the parking spaces to the museum have dropped curbs for wheelchairs and pushchairs, and the land is level in the surrounding area.
- There is street lighting at all times around the museum as we are located on the main road through the town centre.
- The front doors on Park Street have push buttons to open the doors located 1 metre high on either side of the glass doors.
- Access to the main entrance on Park Street is level with no stairs or ramps.
- Once inside TOM, the entrance to SOFO is located by exiting the reception area through a second set of glass doors directly ahead of the main entrance. These doors are push button operated with buttons placed 1 metre high on either side. These doors lead onto a wooden decking area overlooking the garden and the front of SOFO.
- From the decking, access to SOFO is via a central brick staircase with 5 steps or a paving stone ramp on the left hand side of the building leading past the TOM Garden Gallery and along a compacted stone path that runs around the perimeter of the garden to the SOFO main entrance.

SOFO Main Entrance, Reception and Ticketing Area

- The front doors are automatic (movement sensitive) and open inwards.
- When fully open there is a gap of 2 m (2,000 mm, 78 inches).
- The main entrance is step-free and level throughout.
- There is a hearing loop system fitted at reception.
- The flooring is polished concrete throughout.
- The main entrance and shop is lit using ceiling spot lights and the shop has additional lighting.
- There is a low desk directly to the left of you as you move through the main entrance doors.
- The Admissions desk is staffed by museum staff and volunteers who are happy to assist anyone with special requirements.
- A hearing loop system is installed at the reception desk.

Concessionary Ticket Policy

Concessionary ticket rates are offered to those who are:

- Over 60.
- Current students with Student ID/NUS Card.
- Disabled people.
- Armed Forces Personnel with MOD90 Card and veterans.

Complimentary tickets:

- Complimentary tickets are allocated for any essential carer visiting the museum with a wheelchair user or individual with special needs. Notify the member of staff or

volunteer on the desk at the time of purchase and they will issue the carer with a complimentary ticket.

SOFO reserves the right to ask for evidence of the above statuses, which could be proof of age documentation, valid ID, or official documentation showing benefit receipt.

Attractions (displays, exhibits, interactives etc.)

- The main method of interpretation in the galleries is visual, with numerous panels to read and objects on display.
- There are videos with sound and interactive computer exhibits throughout the galleries. Special tours can be organised for visually impaired visitors where our tour guides tailor the tour to fulfil your needs and interests in the collections. Object handling using items from our handling collections can be arranged if pre-booked in advance of your visit too.
- All interpretation boards have large print for the main titles and key information. There are numerous images and objects to see in the cases, and costume items to try on.
- A small number of interpretation boards feature smaller text and/or are elevated more than 1.5 metres off the ground, so may be more difficult for wheelchair users and/or the visually impaired. Staff are always willing to assist on request if help is required.
- There are videos that play on the press of a button which feature background music and voice-over telling you about that particular subject.
- One exhibit, a replica section of a HORSIA Glider aircraft, allows visitors to sit inside and listen to historical recordings through headsets. A small set of 2 steps is the only way to get inside this exhibit, but the headsets themselves will extend to outside the seating area.
- There are telephone hand-sets which can be picked up to hear recordings of oral histories.
- There are no flashing lights in the building.
- The doors into the main galleries are automatic sliding doors (movement sensitive).
- Doors into Cloister and Garden gallery are manual but can be opened and held back if required. The door openings are all at least 1.2m wide (1,200 mm or 47 inches).
- There is additional seating throughout the galleries or portable seats can be given out by reception on request.
- The exhibits are lit using energy-saving spotlights. The delicate items such as textiles (the uniform items) are displayed in lower lighting levels to protect them from decay and fading due to the light.
- The lighting level is even throughout the building and is activated on movement.

Public Toilets

- Access to the toilets is on level ground with no ramps or slopes. There are 4 visitor toilets located close to the main entrance of the building through a set of manual doors into the Cloister Gallery, one of which is an accessible unisex toilet.
- The door to the accessible toilet is 90cm or 35 inches wide to allow wheelchair access. Once inside, there is a 90cm or 35 inch space at the right hand side of the

toilet for a wheelchair, with low-level hooks for bags and coats. The height of the toilet from floor to seat is 50cm or 19 inches. There are grab rails located on either side of the accessible toilet and a red pull-cord for use in an emergency. The sink is on the left hand side of the cubicle and has lever taps to operate the water and a soap dispenser.

- All the toilets are lit by spot lighting in the ceiling.
- All floors are polished concrete.

Shop

- The shop is located in the main entrance of the museum and can be accessed without buying a ticket to see the museum.
- The front entrance and reception/shop area is open plan, all on one level and accessible for wheelchairs and pushchairs with no steps or slopes.
- The shop units are located around the walls and on free-standing units on the shop floor. There are spaces in between the units to allow wheelchair/pushchair access.
- There is a low counter at the reception/shop desk.

Grounds and Gardens

- The Oxfordshire Museum garden is outside SOFO with open lawns and flower beds.
- The garden has a compacted stone path going all the way around it.
- The footpath is 2 meters wide.
- There are a number of park benches located around the garden for visitors to take a well-earned break and look at the flowers.

Additional Information

- There is a wheelchair refuge point on the first floor of the building which is sign posted.
- In the event of a fire we ask all wheelchair users on the first floor to wait to be directed by a member of staff to this area where they will be rescued by the Fire Service.
- Some of the museum staff have received basic Disability Awareness Training, and Customer Service Training. You should expect high standards of visitor care at SOFO.
- We welcome assistance dogs and they are also welcome in the garden. A water bowl is available at the front desk on request.
- We do not have a dedicated charging station for mobility scooters but we will always try to allocate a space for you to do this upon request.

Future Plans

- We are currently reviewing the website to make it more accessible.
- We are investigating installing a hearing loop system for the galleries, currently the system is in place at reception and a portable system is available for use in the meeting room.
- We are reviewing our galleries' interpretation panels to improve visually-impaired visitors' experience of the museum and adding written guides for the oral recordings for hearing-impaired visitors.

Contact Information for Museum Office

Address:

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum
Harrison's Lane
Woodstock
Oxfordshire
OX20 1SS

Telephone: 01993 811 210

Email: frontofhouse@sofo.org.uk

Website: www.sofo.org.uk

Grid Reference: GR444167

Hours of Operation

Tuesday to Friday: 11am - 5pm

Saturday: 11am – 5pm

Sunday (and Bank Holidays): 2pm - 5pm

For our seasonal hours and variations to normal opening hours please see our website www.sofo.org.uk before you plan your visit.

Approved at Board: 13th June 2017

Review Date: 13th June 2020