

SEA LIFE Brighton: Access Statement May 2018

INTRODUCTION

The SEA LIFE Centre is situated in the heart of Brighton right next to Brighton Pier. It can be seen from the main route into Brighton; London Road and is situated on Marine Parade, opposite the sea. It is approximately 1.3 miles from the city centre (27 minutes walk and 8 minutes by taxi) and 100m from the beach.

The centre itself is situated on the roundabout; the gates are between two roads, Madeira Drive and Marine Parade. The centre is situated at the bottom of the gates down 37 steps. An accessible route is across the road towards the Brighton wheel where there is then an access ramp down towards the shore front. This takes you down towards an access tunnel via which you will arrive into the SEA LIFE Courtyard.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone 01273 604234 or email SLCBrighton@merlinentertainments.biz .



PRE-ARRIVAL

Train

The nearest train station is Brighton Train station, approximately 1.3 miles away. Upon arrival into Brighton, you can take a Taxi to the SEA LIFE centre. All taxis outside have accessible vehicles which can be lowered for wheel chair users. The firm we would recommend is TAXI Brighton; their number is 01273 20 40 60.

Buses

Buses from the train station to the SEA LIFE centre depart frequently and there are a number of services which are suitable; the 14C, 27, 37, 37B will take you directly to the SEA LIFE stop. There are other buses which will drop you at Old Steine which is a few minutes walk from the centre. Other services run directly to the SEA LIFE centre along the coast, including the 12, 12A, 12X and the 13X. These will all depart from the city centre. All of Brighton's buses can be lowered to help wheelchair users. They also alert passengers to the different stops via a text board and audible stop announcement.

Approach

The area surrounding the SEA LIFE centre is usually quite busy as it is situated on one of the main roads through Brighton. There are two traffic light points allowing you to cross the roads and roundabout safely. The pavements can be quite high however the curbs have been dropped at both the main entrance and access ramp. The pavements are smooth even surfaces however the access ramp is quite steep so take extra caution when using this.

LOCAL SERVICES

Information on accessible toilets can be found here: <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/leisure-and-libraries/public-toilets/accessible-public-toilets> Most toilets are free to the public but some older ones require a RADAR pass.

Details of local accessible hotels can be found here:

<http://www.visitbrighton.com/accommodation/accessible>

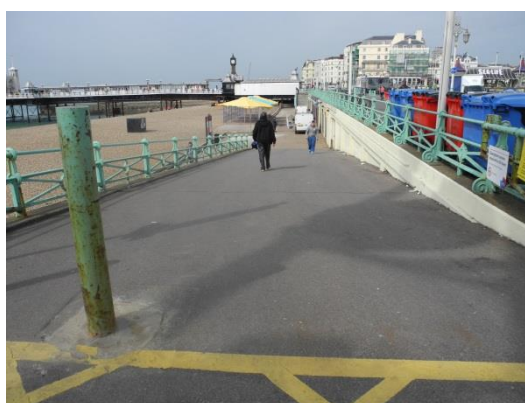
Clear Well mobility in Brighton are able to provide equipment hire, wheelchair repair and shop mobility. Their website is linked here and their telephone number is 01273 692244.

<http://www.clearwellmobility.co.uk/>.

Upon arrival, we offer copies of our access statement in A4 and A3. We also offer our map and talk time guide in A4. We currently have three induction loops in place.

CAR PARKING AND ARRIVAL

Unfortunately we do not have onsite parking for guests due to the location of our centre. However there is disabled parking available approximately 100m away. There are two spaces which are located opposite the Brighton Wheel and next to our access ramp, and further parking is approximately 200m away.



There are pre-paid meters that can be used for parking however this is free for disabled guests with a blue badge. The pavement is largely even with a smooth surface along to the main entrance with dropped curbs at crossing points. The slope leading to our access tunnel is also smooth concrete, however it is steep. There are many other places to park if you are visiting the SEA LIFE centre, however for wheelchair users we would recommend this for accessibility and ease. Other slightly cheaper alternatives include the NCP car parks situated in the centre of the city. The car parking area

is situated next to the sea front and therefore enjoys a lot of natural light. In the evening there are 6 street lamps allowing the area to be well lit at all times.

The entrance door opens inwards but will always be open when the centre is open and the width when clear is 2.1m.

MAIN ENTRANCE, RECEPTION AND TICKETING AREA

The main entrance is situated at the bottom of the tunnel and stairs; there is a small verge from the outside into our admission area. The area is carpeted until you reach the ticket desk and then the floor is concrete. There are no steps in the area and the area is generally clear however during peak periods it can get quite congested with guests queuing to go into the attraction. There is no available seating in the area however if guests do require seats a team member will be more than happy to arrange this. The area is generally well lit due to the large double doors allowing a lot of natural light. The reception desks are 0.8m high however admissions assistants can reach across easily to be able to serve guests. The fast track admissions desk is the easiest as there are no barriers.



We offer complimentary tickets for carers.

We currently offer a hearing induction loop which is fully operational at our main till point – hearing aid users need to switch to the 'T' mode in order to take advantage of this. If you do experience any technical difficulty then please ask our till operators as they have been fully trained on this.

We also have a magnifying glass, larger print documentation and videos with subtitles in order to assist guests.



ATTRACTION (Displays and exhibits)

There is some background music. The doors all open outwards and are very light to push open. The clear door opening width for all doors in the centre is 2.1m. There is seating available at the café and before the ocean tunnel. The majority of flooring is ALCO safety flooring.

ARCADE

After admissions you enter our green screen area where you can have your photo taken. This is on smooth even concrete and is low lit. There is a flash when the photo is taken, however if you do not wish to take part you can just walk through this area. Following this, there are two sets of double doors leading into our arcade area. This has Alco safety flooring and low multi-coloured lighting. The arcade is a large open space with pillars running down the middle of the room. There is a small step approximately 0.2cm high to the displays, however they are all visible without needing to step on this. The width between the displays is 2.3m and there are various information points running alongside these. There is some calming music in the arcade designed to complement the displays. Just before you reach the café there is a rockpool in which you are able to touch crabs and starfish. The height of the display is 0.8m however we do have buckets with which we can take the animals out of the pool. The sinks to wash your hands are opposite the display and are 0.7m in height. Next to this, you can walk around our ray tank however there are 7 steps to the top. The nearest seating to this point is the coffee shop where we have 10 round tables, (0.73m in height and 0.75m in width) and 43 chairs (0.42m in height and 0.43m in width.) This is 76m distance from the entrance.

To the left hand side of the café, the height of the step between the floor and tanks increases to 0.3m. There are two ramps leading up to our native ray tank as well as the behind the scenes tour. The lighting is slightly darker and there is a craft area to the right of the tank.

RAINFOREST

From the arcade, there is a very slight incline into the rainforest section. The flooring is made up of artificial woodchip to create the desired effect; it does have a relatively even surface. There is some wooden theming however all of our displays in this area are very visible. The lighting is slightly darker in this area and there is a noticeable temperature increase due to the animals in this area being tropical. There is a small incline from terrapins to frogs and piranhas and then the flooring changes to slabs of smooth concrete. There is then a double door leading to wooden decking.

OCEAN DISPLAY

Once through the double doors, there are two ways to access the ocean display. The accessible route is to the left, clearly signed below. There is a decline into the ocean tunnel; the width of this is 2.3m. The ocean tunnel is to the left of the ramp next to a small seating area called turtle rescue. There is a video playing with subtitles as well as stall chairs and tables. The area is generally very well lit.

The second option in order to see the top of the ocean display is up 26 steps. Unfortunately **there is no alternative, accessible route to the top of the display**. There is a large amount of seating once up by the ocean display. There is low lighting and barriers all the way round our ocean display. The width between the seating and the safety rail is 0.75m. We also have a glass bottom boat which is available for an additional £3.00 per guest. Once down 21 steps you can access our ocean tunnel. The width is 1.5m and relatively low lighting. The flooring is ALCO safety flooring throughout.

SEAHORSES:

Following the ocean tank, there is a small ramp up towards our seahorse tank. The lighting here is Bright and the flooring is ALCO safety flooring. There is a ramp to the left leading up towards the Coral section.

SEA STARS

The Seas Stars area has dark theming however is well lit with coloured lights. The area has smooth even flooring and the narrowest point in this section is 1.4m. The information points are located low down and the interactive features are also easily accessible.

BEHIND THE SCENES

SEA LIFE Brighton also offers a Behind the Scenes Tour in which guests can see what we do to care for our animals. The area is approximately 1.5m wide with its narrowest point being 1.2m. The lighting is LED lights with ALCO safety flooring.

PUBLIC TOILETS

The toilets are situated in between the arcade and Sea stars exhibition. The accessible toilet is on the left side and is the first toilet you can reach. The flooring is level and smooth leading up to the toilet area and into the cubicle. The door width is 0.9m. There is a clear space to the right of the toilet or in front (when facing the WC). This space is 1.5m. There are two folding support rails either side of the toilet which can be lowered down with ease in order to assist. The height of the toilet is 0.47m. There is a red cord to the right of the disabled toilet which can be pulled, activating an alarm. The toilets are very well lit; we use LED lighting. The floor is non-slip ALCO safety flooring. The sinks are 0.7m in height. We also have a grab rail on the back of the door to allow for closure both by the handle or on the hinge side. There are lower coat hooks as well as a full length wall mirror.

CATERING

The café area is situated in the middle of the main arcade area; it is part of the even surface. It is an open plan area in between our ray tank and harbour tanks. There is a clear pathway accessible from both sides of the café to the serving counter. There are 10 tables with 43 chairs around them. The height of the tables are 0.73m. The tables and chairs are made out of solid wood. The arcade lighting is multi-coloured and low.

We currently offer gluten free and vegetarian food options in our coffee shop as well as providing allergy information on all of our products that we sell. We also offer soya milk as an alternative to cow's milk. We offer a counter service in the coffee shop however our commercial assistants will be

more than happy to help you take your purchase to a table. The menu and prices are available on the menu board behind the counter as well as advertised beside each product, and are available in larger print on request. We currently use disposable white cutlery which is available next to the drinks fridge in between the pick and mix. The toilets are situated 46m from the café.

SHOP

After the Jurassic Seas section, straight ahead is our gift shop and photo area. If you have had your photo taken you can view and purchase these here. The height of the desk is 0.8m and the area is wide and well lit. The gift shop is easily accessible with clear access out of the building. The counter is 0.8m and the displays offer a range of products that are at various heights; staff are more than happy to assist if required.

COURTYARD

Following the gift shop, there is a sign to the left showing access via the tunnel. There is a smooth concrete surface throughout.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Qualified First Aid Staff will be on duty at all times. If you require First aid please make any member of staff aware.

Evacuation chair information

As you make your way into the ocean tunnel there is an area straight ahead called Turtle Rescue. At the end you can see two sets of double doors -this is where our muster station is located. In the event of a fire, we ask all disabled guests to make their way to this point. The meeting point is behind two sets of heavy fire doors (outward opening). Here our displays team will meet you and assemble the evacuation chairs in order to move guests out of the building safely. The evacuation process is from below ground level up two flights of stairs. We have a limit of five wheelchair users in the centre at any one time and the safe working load is 120KG.

Our team have undertaken the Disabled Go Training. We have also completed in-house training in order to allow our staff to assist disabled guests to the best of their ability.

Assistance dogs are welcome throughout our attraction and we are more than happy to provide water bowls on request. Assistance dogs are not permitted to go on our behind the scenes tour or our glass bottom boat for safety reasons.

FUTURE PLANS

Our building has grade 1 and 2 listed elements which means that there are some things we are unable to change.

In the future we would like to look at providing a camera link from our ocean display and glass bottom boat into our ocean tunnel. We shall also continue to reviewing our website to see if there is anything else we can do to make it more accessible. Further to this we will be reviewing all of our signage in order to more clearly highlight key information. If you have any suggestions we would

love to hear from you, so please do not hesitate to contact us on 01273 604234 or alert a member of staff when you are visiting us.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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