



CONKERS

ACCESS STATEMENT

M L Stickland

Planning Solutions Limited

25/05/2009



Conkers Discovery Centre

“Conkers has a commitment to provide the highest level of service and to understanding and meeting individual customers and specialist group needs. We strive to create and deliver a quality of experience to all visitors and we are fully committed to providing accessibility for all, wherever this is possible.”

Conkers staff are available and will be happy to assist with any questions you may have regarding our facilities and our programmes.

For more information you can telephone us on 01283 216633 or visit our website at www.visitconkers.com .

Before you visit

- Conkers is open every day except Christmas Day.
- Closing times differ through the year but Conkers opens at 10.00am every day.
- Summer opening: April – September, 10.00am to 6.00pm.
- Spring (February half term to April) and Autumn (September to November) - Both periods 10.00am to 5.00pm.
- Winter opening 10.00am to 4.30pm (1st December to February half term)
- Early day closures occur on the following days:

Christmas Eve	3.00pm
New Years Eve	3.00pm
Firework Event, 7 th November	3.00pm

Times may be subject to alteration, please ring to confirm.



Accessibility Generally

The majority of footpaths and routes throughout the grounds at Conkers Discovery Centre and Conkers Waterside are fully accessible. The train linking both Centres (which takes approximately 8 minutes between Centres) has dedicated spaces for wheelchairs on the rear coach. The platforms provide level access to the train coaches.

Internally, in Conkers Discovery Centre, the exhibition areas are for the most part level with a lift access to the upper floor of the Enchanted Forest Walkway.

The Waterside Centre is fully accessible with lift access to the lower floor restaurant and lakeside decking.

For a more detailed description of Conkers facilities go to page 7.

Parking

Conkers has ample free car parking at both the Discovery and Waterside Centres with ten dedicated disabled spaces reserved close to the reception entrance at Discovery and four further spaces close to the reception entrance at Waterside Centre.

There is dedicated coach and mini bus parking at the Conkers Discovery Centre alongside the main building, some 50/80 metres from the reception entrance, access is level throughout.



Public Transport

There is no dedicated public transport directly servicing the Conkers Centres. There are, however, various train and bus routes which provide services to the nearby towns and villages as detailed in the following information.

Trains

The nearest railway station to Conkers is at Burton-on-Trent. Further afield we have Tamworth Station (16.8 miles) and Derby (18.9 miles).

Taxis are available directly outside the Burton-on-Trent station which will transport you to Conkers Discovery Centre (which is approximately 8.4 miles away) in approximately 15 minutes. Costs generally are £12 - £15 per journey.

This is the recommended train station.

Buses

The most frequent local bus services run to Ashby-de-la-Zouch from Burton-on-Trent. The number 8 bus route runs from Burton New Street to Ashby-de-la-Zouch and then number 23 runs from Market Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch to Moira on the hour at 20 minutes to the hour until 15.40, then at 17.05 and 18.40 and stops some 200 metres from Conkers Waterside Centre. Links from Derby, Leicester and Loughborough to the local bus network at Ashby-de-la-Zouch are available.

Bicycles

Conkers Discovery Centre has an excellent network of cycle tracks leading from the Centre out into the National Forest area with a total of 8 kms of newly laid cycle



paths linking into the National Sustrans Routes No. 6 and there are dedicated bike parking and lock-up facilities at both the Discovery and Waterside Centres.

Conkers Waterside Centre provides direct access on to the Ashby Woulds Canal Basin and the canal side path to Moira Furnace and Donisthorpe Woodland. It also provides entry into the Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail which passes adjacent to the Waterside Centre and can be accessed via the new Ennstone trail starting from Waterside's car parking area.

Getting to Conkers by road

Conkers can easily be accessed by road, from the South via the M42, Junction 11 (approx 5 miles) and North, the A42 via Measham (approx 3 miles). From the West via the A38 Birmingham-Derby trunk road. Conkers lies 8.4 miles to the East of the A444 from Burton-on-Trent to Overseal. From the A50 linking Stoke-on-Trent to the M1 motorway, you can reach Conkers travelling South on the A514, Swarkestone to Swadlincote route via Melville and Woodville to the Clock Roundabout. At this junction take the second exit directly southwards towards Moira. Conkers is located approximately 1 mile from this junction.

Directions to Conkers are provided by brown tourist signs from the A42, M42, A444 and A514.

For navigational aids Conkers full address is as follows:

Conkers Discovery Centre
Millennium Avenue
Rawdon Road
Near Swadlincote
DE12 6GA



- A downloadable map is available online @ www.visitconkers.com
- Or visit, www.streetmap.co.uk and input the postcode for a detailed map of the local area.

Entrance and Reception

Conkers has two entrances and reception areas. The main entrance is at Conkers Discovery Centre. It is accessed directly from the car park on level ground and provides automatic door entry to the reception area.

The Conkers counter is sectioned with accessible counter space providing both wheelchair level service and direct access to the main exhibition areas.

- There is one induction hearing loop point within the reception counter.
- For 2009 we will be able to supply large print guides on request.
- A site layout map is available from reception.
- Please note that buggy tours or transport is available at Conkers, however due to demand this service must be pre-booked. Please ring our general information number 01283 216633 for information.

Toilet facilities

Conkers has ample toilet facilities in both of its Centres.

The Discovery Centre has toilets including a dedicated disabled facility adjacent to reception. It has a second set of toilets also with a disabled unit adjacent to the Olive Tree Restaurant within the building.

At Waterside there is an external multi-use toilet with disabled facilities adjacent to the Waterside rail platform and internally on level access the Centre has two toilet



areas. Both with a disabled toilet, at the reception entrance and at the upper level link to the amphitheatre and rail platform.

A wheelchair platform access lift is available to move from the entry floor to the lower floor adjacent to the lake and return. There is also a long ramp from the lakeside to the upper level adjacent to the rail to amphitheatre link; this is a gradient of no more than 1:20 throughout (gentle).

Dedicated baby changing facilities are available close to reception at both the Discovery and Waterside Centres.

First Aid

A dedicated first aid room (treatment room) is located next to reception at the Discovery Centre and a first aid point is located next to reception in the Waterside Centre.

Conkers has a number of first aiders available at all times. If you should require assistance please contact either of the reception areas and we will respond as quickly as possible to your needs. Conkers uses site radios to keep in contact throughout the site and you are recommended not to move anyone who may need treatment, we will come to you.

Electric buggies can be utilised to recover persons requiring assistance and the external areas are mainly accessible via our service gates to local ambulances if necessary.

If you have any special needs whilst on site or a specific dietary or treatment requirement please contact our reception team on 01283 216633 EXT 0 before you visit to ensure we are able to meet your needs.



Enjoying your day at Conkers

Inside Areas

The largest indoor area at Conkers is the Discovery Centre; it has level access throughout the ground floor including the exhibition area and the Olive Tree Restaurant, which links directly to the external exits to the grounds via push to open doors.

The light levels in the exhibition area are kept artificially low to enable visitors to view the projected screen images and video representation around the exhibition; the graphic panels are however all illuminated and have readable text sizes. There is no formal route around the exhibition which moves through the four seasons with exhibits representing life within a British woodland environment and the cycle of life, the world's environment, recycling and regeneration.

The Enchanted Forest Adventure area is not fully accessible but has a low level trail through the ground floor zone which leads to a wheelchair lift providing access to the first floor walk through Tree Top canopy trail, an illusion, which may disorientate some visitors by disturbing the natural sense of balance. There is a slide from this area back to the ground floor or you can return via the lift provided.

The Waterside Centre has a younger children's play area "Billy Bonkers" located adjacent to the reception, which is not fully accessible to wheelchairs at the upper levels. The reception level links directly to the outside, via an upper walkway to the Waterside station and the upper amphitheatre level, toilets are located on this route.

A lift is provided to take wheelchairs or buggies down to the Waters Edge Restaurant below, with direct access to the outside and the lakeside decking from the lower floor.



Outside at Conkers

Conkers has approximately 120 acres of external grounds with two areas, Discovery (108 acres) and Waterside (12 acres) linked by a railway which regularly delivers visitors by train via open-sided carriages between the two centres. The train has level access from platforms and has dedicated wheelchair and pushchair spaces in the carriages. The carriages have hooked up safety lines on each carriage and these should not be removed or undone at any time on the train's short journey.

There is a gentle ramp access at the Waterside platform down to the ground level adjacent to the Whistlestop Kiosk, an area for refreshments with external seating and the Playdale Playground, which is accessible, but has play equipment and structures which are not usable by all abilities.

The pathways and trails, including the board walk at Waterside are generally gentle and can be accessed by wheelchair. Where there are steps at the amphitheatre the lower woodland walk and the "Pipers Mound" there are also adjacent walks which wind up to the same positions. Picnic areas are available within the site and occasional seating is provided for resting on route.

Sarah's Wood

Adjacent to the Waterside Centre, on the other side of the Canal Basin, via the canal bridge or the footpath around the Basin, you will find Sarah's Wood. This is a dedicated all ability area with a play park specifically designed for children with disabilities.



Discovery Centre

The Discovery Centre has ample external space to explore and whilst some slopes are slightly more than gentle the entire site can be reached through trails and pathways by wheelchairs.

The lakeside walk provides several picnic benches and tables alongside the lake with easy access and picnics are welcome at the Centre, but please do not use the tables in the restaurant for this purpose as they may be needed by people using the restaurant facilities.

The outdoor activity (assault) course at Conkers Discovery Centre includes some major structures and rope bridges which are not suitable for wheelchairs and these areas are normally restricted to teenagers and adults due to the physical challenges they pose and for Health and Safety reasons we would request that visitors do not allow children of lower age to participate in these facilities.

The indoor play area, “The Enchanted Forest” and the “Playdale Play Park” at Waterside are more suited for younger age groups use.

Refreshments and Eating at Conkers

Conkers has a good selection of catering facilities from kiosks serving hot and cold drinks, light snacks and ice-creams to the Waters Edge Restaurant which offers a range of char grilled dishes and the Gallery Restaurant which offers a Sunday carvery available to visitors and the public at large. At Discovery the Olive Tree Restaurant offers a good range of light lunches, snacks and beverages to meet your taste and is open throughout the year. In school holidays we provide additional catering facilities with a greater range of choice to ensure you can be served without delay.



All of our restaurant facilities are fully accessible and offer a choice of vegetarian foods as well as specialist dietary requirements (which must be booked in advance).

The Waterside Centre offers a coffee lounge within the Gallery Restaurant, next to reception, serving Starbucks Coffee and savoury snacks and patisseries throughout the day.

Conkers offers facilities for private parties, social gatherings and corporate meetings or conferences including team building. We are able to offer a variety of menus to suit every event and diet. Please view our website on www.visitconkers.com for further information on the menu choices and catering facilities available at Conkers.

Retail Areas

Conkers “Trading Post” has an excellent range of giftware and specialist products, from books on trees and plants to garden items and small pick items for children. The main shop area is adjacent to the reception at the Discovery Centre and is well lit throughout and fully accessible.

The National Forest Gallery, which promotes the work of local and regional artists with four / five changing exhibitions annually, is inside the Trading Post retail area.

There is a secondary retail area in the reception at Waterside which has less choice but nevertheless has an interesting range of gift items.

The Amphitheatre

The amphitheatre at Conkers is located within the Waterside Centre. It plays host to many special events and concerts each year and it is the theatre for our special programmes such as Nick Spellman, the Forest Dwellers and the Circus Workshops



which generally feature during the school holiday periods and are included in our daily ticket price.

The amphitheatre is multi-layered with tiered seating accessed by two central stairways. The stage area at the bottom of the seating is accessible via a level path from the Waterside lower floor (access by lift). The upper tiers of the amphitheatre are fully accessible via a 2 metre wide path from the station and Waterside reception and there is a dedicated viewing area for wheelchair users to the right of the amphitheatre.

On concert nights, the bar and catering facilities are located just to the rear of the upper walkway in the “Willow Walk”. These facilities are on level ground and can be easily accessed from the amphitheatre upper path.

Entry to the amphitheatre on concert nights is generally from the Waterside car park and Waterside reception. There are disabled parking bays close to reception and level access through to reception, toilets and outside to the upper amphitheatre path.

Conkers amphitheatre has a capacity for some 500 persons seated or up to 800 persons standing and seated.

Wheelchair users are welcome at all of our concerts and events.

Special Events

Conkers offers a number of special events throughout the year, including concerts, theatre, pantomime, the Ashby Woulds Rotary Club annual fireworks evening and Halloween. We also offer our Winter Wonderland and Santa Specials which run from mid-November to Christmas Eve.



All of our events are fully accessible to wheelchair users. Special needs groups can be accommodated, however we would ask that you contact our reception and pre-book your requirements to ensure that we can provide any necessary support or assistance.

Education and Group Bookings

Conkers Education Department offers a range of curriculum linked programmes to all abilities of children, special needs groups and disabled parties. We provide free access to group helpers, teachers and assistants are provided free entry on a one in eight basis. Pre-visit familiarisation tours are welcome and our education staff will provide dedicated programmes if required to suit your needs.

We also design and deliver leadership and team building programmes for corporate groups, students and can design days for all abilities.

Specialist dietary needs can also be provided for (advance arrangements and bookings required).

Our Educational Rangers will be happy to provide any information you may require.

Conkers also has good links with two local coach operators who can offer good value coach travel from your base to Conkers and return. Please ask our education team for details.

To help you plan your group or educational visit please contact either Catherine Wrenn or Gerry O'Brien at:-



Conkers Education Department
Conkers Discovery Centre
Millennium Avenue
Rawdon Road
Near Swadlincote
Derbyshire
DE12 6GA

Tel: 01283 213731 (Direct)
Tel: 01283 216633 (Ext 228)
Fax: 01283 214623
Email: education@visitconkers.com
Website: www.visitconkers.com

Useful contact information:

Conkers Discovery Centre
Millennium Avenue
Rawdon Road
Near Swadlincote
Derbyshire
DE12 6GA

Tel: 01283 216633
Ext Nos:
Operator 0
Corporate 221
Retail "Trading Post" 231
Education 228

Fax: 01283 210321



Planning Solutions Limited – Head Office
(Conkers Operating Company)

Address: 9 Leigh Road
Havant
Hampshire
PO9 2ES

Tel: 023 92 481999
Fax: 023 92 481888
Email: info@pslplan.co.uk

Burton-on-Trent Station – Taxi Service 01283 532000
Conkers Local taxis Tel No. 01283 210330

Local coach companies: Cresswells (Moira) 01283 217215 / 217229
www.cresswellscoaches.com

Roberts Tours Ltd (Hugglescote) 01530 817444
www.robertsholidays.co.uk

For any other questions please contact our reception at Conkers Discovery, we will be happy to assist you with any questions you may have and we look forward to greeting you at Conkers!