

# ACCESS STATEMENT

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW FOR YOUR VISIT



## PLANNING AHEAD

*READY FOR A GREAT DAY?*

### **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.visiconkers.com](http://www.visiconkers.com) or send a tweet @conkerscentre

### **Before you visit**

- CONKERS is open every day except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Weekday Maintenance days in January
- Closing times differ through the year but CONKERS opens at 10.00am every day.
  - Spring: February half term to April 10.00am to 5.00pm
  - Summer opening: April – September 10.00am to 6.00pm
  - Autumn: September to November 10.00am to 5.00pm
- Early day closures occur on the following days:
  - Christmas Eve 4.30pm
  - New Years Eve 4.30pm

### **Accessibility Generally**

The majority of footpaths and routes throughout the grounds at CONKERS Discovery Centre and CONKERS Waterside are 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 accessible with lift access to the lower floor restaurant and lakeside decking.

For visitors with hearing impairments we have two hearing loops at the Discovery Centre.

Our staff are always on hand to help out.

## **Parking**

CONKERS has 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 the 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.

## **Buses**

The most frequent local bus services runs to Swadlincote Civic Station from Burton-on - Trent and Ashby de la Zouch. The number 9a bus route runs from Burton New Street to Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Swadlincote. From Swadlincote visitors would need to take a taxi to CONKERS. No bus service stops at CONKERS.

## **Bicycles**

CONKERS Discovery Centre has an 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 Burtonon-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 <http://www.visitCONKERS.com/visiting/findus>
- Or visit, [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk) and input the postcode for a detailed map of the local area.

## Entrance and Receptions

CONKERS has two entrances and reception areas. The main entrance is at CONKERS Discovery Centre (the other is at Waterside). They are accessed directly from the car park on level ground and provides automatic door entry to the reception area.

At the Discovery and Waterside Centres the counters is sectioned with accessible counter space providing a wheelchair level service.

□ There are two induction loop points within the reception counter at the Discovery Centre.

□ 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.

The key entrance and exit doorways are 110cm wide.

## Toilet Facilities

CONKERS has 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 220 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 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 ropes 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.

Dedicated wheelchair spaces are provided at the upper level of the amphitheatre for wheelchair users of shows and entertainment.

### 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 very young children and wheelchairs due to the physical challenges they pose and for Health and Safety reasons.

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 selection of catering facilities from kiosks serving hot and cold drinks, light snacks and ice-creams to the Waterside Restaurant (open on a seasonal basis) 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 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 accessible and offer a choice of vegetarian foods as well as specialist dietary requirements (which must be booked in advance). The Waterside Centre also 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](http://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 is accessible.

The National Forest information area within the Trading Post providing details of local walks and cycle routes together with maps and local tourism information.

## **The Amphitheatre**

The amphitheatre at CONKERS is located within the Waterside Centre. It plays host to many special events and concerts each year. It is also the theatre for our special programmes such as the Forest Dwellers and the Circus Workshops which generally feature during the school holiday periods and are included in the 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 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, 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 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. Previsit familiarisation tours are welcome and our education staff will provide dedicated programmes if required to suit your needs.

CONKERS is an approved schools visit location and has 'LOTC' accreditation - Learning Outside The Classroom.

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 the Education Manager at:-

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

Tel: 01283 213731 (Direct)  
Tel: 01283 216633 (Ext 228)  
Email: [education@visitCONKERS.com](mailto:education@visitCONKERS.com)  
Website: [www.visitCONKERS.com](http://www.visitCONKERS.com)

## **Location and Contact Details:**

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

Tel: 01283 216633  
Ext Nos:  
- Operator 0  
- Corporate 221  
- Education 228

## **Planning Solutions Limited – Head Office (CONKERS Operating Company)**

**Address: 9 Leigh Road**  
**Havant**  
**Hampshire**  
**PO9 2 ES**

Tel: 023 92 481999  
Fax: 023 92 481888  
Email: [info@pslplan.co.uk](mailto:info@pslplan.co.uk)

**Burton-on-Trent Station Taxi Service 01283 532000**

**CONKERS Local taxis tel no. 01283 210330**

**Local coach companies**

**Macpherson's Coaches 01530 270226**

**[www.macphersoncoaches.co.uk](http://www.macphersoncoaches.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!

