

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 guests/visitors.

## **Access Statement for Beckingham Marshes**

### **Introduction**

Beckingham Marshes is a small, developing site on the banks of the River Trent in Nottinghamshire, near the town of Gainsborough. Here we are working in partnership with the Environment Agency to create a thriving wet grassland and lowland hay meadow reserve. Already the site boasts breeding lapwing, other waders such as curlew and redshank, a large colony of tree sparrows, barn owls, winter wildfowl and water voles.

The site is situated on a floodplain of the River Trent and is flat and open in nature. There is one way marked visitor trail comprising a mown grass path and small sections of boardwalk and wooden bridge, leading to a raised viewing platform. At the site entrance and along the trail there is a kissing gate and pedestrian gates, along with gated information points. The trail provides a walk through the developing meadow and leads to views over the wet grassland, with good opportunity to see the reserve's wildlife highlights. There is no visitor centre or toilets, however parking and toilet facilities are available when open at the Old Willow Works building opposite the site entrance (not RSPB). The car park is surfaced with a combination of keyblocking and gravel.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone 01636 893611 or email [jennifer.wallace@rspb.org.uk](mailto:jennifer.wallace@rspb.org.uk).

### **Pre-Arrival**

- The reserve is most easily accessible by car, however it is possible to access the site via public transport, using rail or bus and the on foot to the reserve entrance.
- The nearest railway stations are Gainsborough Lea Road (3.6miles/5.8km) and Gainsborough Central (4.5miles/7.3km) from the reserve entrance. Gainsborough Lea Road is the most

frequently used station and the easiest walking route from here to the reserve entrance is to exit the station turning left onto Lea Road. Follow Lea Road north for 500m. On reaching a roundabout, take the second exit (straight on) continuing on Lea Road. After another 320m there is a set of traffic lights at a crossroads. Turn left onto The Flood Road and go over the bridge (over the River Trent). Just over the bridge and before the sharp right hand bend, there is a public footpath on the right near the Trent Port pub. Turn right down this public footpath. Follow the footpath for 1400m until reaching Old Trent Road at John Brash timber yard. Turn left onto Old Trent Road. Continue on Old Trent Road for 1300m until reaching the reserve entrance on the left (Old Willow Works on the right).

- There are no accessible taxi firms in Gainsborough.
- Stagecoach Bassetlaw operate a bus service from Gainsborough Bus Station to Beckingham village (97). This service operates Monday-Friday at 06.42 and 07.32 and then at approximately two hourly intervals from 08.47 until 18.17 from Gainsborough Bus Station, arriving in Beckingham after 14 minutes. Alight at Beckingham The Croft. The return journey from Beckingham Station Road (note different bus stop to outward journey) leaves at approximately two hourly intervals from 09.18 until 18.38. There is a Saturday service operating at slightly different times.
- The approach road to the site is a tarmac road (Old Trent Road). There is no pavement, however there are wide grass verges along most of the length. There is a pavement west of the level crossing where Station Road becomes Old Trent Road.
- There is no reserve information available in alternative formats.
- The reserve is open 24 hours, every day of the year, there is no entrance charge and registered assistance dogs are welcome.

### **Car Parking Facilities and Arrival**

- Parking is available at the Old Willow Works building, opposite the reserve entrance (150m from entrance gate) and reserve visitors are welcome to use this. It is however, not an RSPB car park. It is usually open from 09.00 - 17.00 every day, but this depends on the availability of caretakers (not RSPB staff). There is room for approximately 20 cars (gravel surface), with three wider spaces (keyblocked) available, however these are not specifically

designated as Blue Badge spaces. There is no charge for the car park.

- The surface from the car park to the reserve entrance is tarmac and hard standing track. This is level, but the track is uneven in places.
- The car park is lit, however there is no lighting outside the car park.
- The most convenient drop off point is the car park.
- The reserve entrance is a kissing gate.

### **Nature Trails**

- There is one visitor trail, 530 metres in length, taking approximately 15-25 minutes to complete one way. The trail is not circular - the outbound and return routes are the same.
- The trail consists of mostly mown grass path, that is firm, but uneven in places and can get very wet in the winter and bare mud areas can get very slippery when wet (especially at gate entrances).
- There are two very small sections of narrow boardwalk and a wooden bridge, both with non-slip surfaces and 4 pedestrian gates to negotiate. All grass paths are wide enough for two wheelchair/pushchair users to pass, however the bridge and fenced areas over culverts are narrower and would require single file use.
- The trail is way marked and there are 4 'discovery dome' enclosures along the way, at 200-300m intervals. These small fenced areas each include a bench and some interpretation and are accessed through a pedestrian gate.
- At the end of the trail, there is a raised viewing platform overlooking one of the key areas of the site (see 'Viewing Facilities' section).
- All print on interpretation is clear and easy to read, but size of the font used varies. All text can either be read from a seated (viewing platform) or standing ('discovery domes') position and there are no covers over any of the interpretation.
- There are no staff based on site, however reserve staff visit the site weekly and there are Volunteer Wardens on site most days for at least part of the day.

- The only site map is shown on the modular board at the reserve entrance.
- Features of interest include the 'discovery domes' showing artifacts found on site and the raised viewing platform overlooking the key areas of wet grassland creation on site.
- For much of the year (usually March-November), there are cattle grazing the site.

### **Viewing Facilities**

- The main viewing facility on the reserve is the raised viewing platform at the end of the visitor trail. There are three steps up to this platform and the entrance is gated. There are two benches, interpretation boards and a fixed telescope within the platform.
- The gate is on a latch, but is easily opened. Visitors are asked to please keep the gate closed at all times to exclude cattle from the platform.
- There are two interpretation boards offering site information. This is displayed on an angled plinth in front of the fixed benches and is in clear text, however the font size varies. The information can be read from a seated position in front of the boards.
- There is a telescope fixed to the platform for viewing wildlife on the surrounding fields. A step is available to allow children to use this facility as well as adults.
- The two benches seat 4-6 people and are fixed to the platform floor.
- The platform is open, therefore there is no shelter and no flaps or windows to open viewing ports.

### **Public Toilets**

- There are no WC's on site, however there are toilet facilities available at the Old Willow Works building, 150m from the reserve entrance and 10m from the car park. There is an accessible WC available in the same location. The toilets here however are not RSPB responsibility and therefore access cannot be guaranteed. The facilities are usually open from 09.00-17.00 daily, but this depends upon the availability of the caretaker (not RSPB staff).

## **Catering**

- There are no refreshments available on site.
- The nearest shop is in Beckingham village 1.2miles/1.8km from the reserve entrance. Take Old Trent Road from the reserve entrance west towards Beckingham village. At the end of the road, turn right onto Station Road. From this junction, take the third right onto High Street (after approximately 300m). The shop is on the left after 100m on the corner of Bar Road North.
- There are larger shops and other facilities in Gainsborough, 3.1miles/5.0km from the reserve entrance. Gainsborough is accessed from the A631 heading east.

## **Additional Information**

- Signage and reserve information typically varies in text size, but is always produced using clear contrast. There are some pictograms in use, but most signage and information is paragraphs of text, illustrated with photographs and hand drawings. Colours vary from black or white text on backgrounds of green, blue, white or black.

## **Future Plans**

- As Beckingham Marshes is a low key visitor reserve, there are currently no plans to further develop visitor facilities in the foreseeable future. This is in line with the site's status as a small scale visitor operation.

## **Contact Information**

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Website: [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

Grid Reference: SK794900

Hours Of Operation: Reserve trail open 24 hours, every day

Local Accessible Taxi: There are no accessible taxi services in Gainsborough, however some may be available in surrounding larger towns.

Local Public Transport: Stagecoach Bassetlaw (part of Stagecoach East Midlands) operate a bus service from Gainsborough Bus Station to Beckingham village (97) - details as above. Stagecoach East Midlands -

<https://www.stagecoachbus.com/about/east-midlands> 0345 605 0 605

East Midlands Trains and Northern Trains operate trains to and from the Gainsborough stations - details as above.

East Midlands Trains -

[www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk)

Northern Trains - [www.northernrailway.co.uk](http://www.northernrailway.co.uk)