

Accessibility Guide for RSPB Balranald Nature Reserve

balranald@rspb.org.uk,

07768042547,
01876 560422

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/balranald/>

Contact for accessibility enquiries: Jamie Boyle



Welcome

Explore a wildlife-rich grassland haven on the beautiful Scottish island of North Uist. This stunning Hebridean nature reserve has sweeping sandy beaches, a rocky foreshore, wild marshes and sculpted sand dunes. It's the perfect place to learn about traditional crofting agriculture, corncrakes and other wildlife.

At a Glance

Level Access

- There is level access from the main entrance to:
 - Balranald Nature Reserve toilet
- There is level access from the car park to:
 - Beach

Visual

- Some parts of the venue have low lighting.

General

- There is a public toilet for disabled visitors.

Getting here

Hougharry
Isle of North Uist
HS6 5DL

Travel by public transport

- You can get to RSPB Balranald Nature Reserve by bus and boat or ferry.
- There is a bus service which runs across the Outer Hebrides, although these do not always stop at Balranald. Contact Grenitote Travel on 01876 560 244 on the morning of desired travel to ensure the bus will stop at Balranald. The bus stop is 0.50 miles / 1.6 km from RSPB Balranald Nature Reserve.
- Situated on North Uist, either a ferry or a plane will need to be taken to reach the island. Ferries for Lochmaddy leave from Uig on Skye, but the reserve can also be reached via ferries from Mallaig and Oban which berth at Lochboisdale in South Uist.
The ferries run throughout the year, and more details can be found at www.calmac.co.uk
- You can get a taxi with Alda's Taxis / Minibus by calling 01876 500 215.
- You can get a taxi with A1 Taxi's by calling 07769 637755.

Parking

- We have a car park. There are accessible parking spaces. The parking is less than 50 metres from the main entrance. Parking is free.
- There is a drop-off point at the main entrance. The drop-off point has a dropped kerb.
- From the car park to the entrance, there is level access.

Arrival



Path to main entrance

- From the street to the main entrance, there is level access.
- The path is 900mm wide, or more.



Main entrance

- The main entrance has level access.
- The main door is side hung and manual.
- The door is 830mm wide.



kissing gate with 900mm wide entrance and deep access point



Access door with 830mm access



Path access

Getting around inside

Visual Impairment - General Information

- Some parts of the venue have low lighting.



Gap in wall 850mm wide - this divides the visitor centre room in two.



Wider gap of 870mm

Public toilet

Balranald Nature Reserve toilet

- There is a public toilet for disabled visitors.
- From the main entrance to the public toilet, there is level access. The route is 900mm wide, or more.
- The toilet door is 900mm wide.
- The direction of transfer is to the left.
- There is 600mm at the side of the toilet. There is 1350mm in front of the toilet. The toilet seat is 400mm high. The toilet has handrails.



Getting around outside

Designated Walking Trail

Balranald Nature Trail

- The trail is 4500metres long. Some of the trail has a loose surface. Some of the trail has cobbles.

- The middle section of the path is blocked by a kissing gate, and beyond the path is very variable in quality. The trail is sloped. The trail has seats.
- The first part of the path follows the crofting road, which is partially tarred and the rest is made up of compressed sand and soil. The middle section is blocked by narrow kissing gates and the track becomes a narrow path through the vegetation. This has had no management on it, and is a natural path. This crosses boulder beaches and some steep areas, which are not recommended for anyone of limited mobility. The latter part of the track again joins the road, or follows easy walking paths along the top of the beach.



Faint worn grass track over rough terrain



Wide sandy track, also used by vehicles.

Beach

- The beach access point is 400.00meters from the nearest car park.
- From the nearest car park to the beach, there is level access. There is tactile paving at the beach entrance.
- The beaches associated with Balranald Nature Reserve do not have any infrastructure associated with them. The access in places is steep, but there is a gradual gradient at the access from Hougharry township.



Lower carpark with beach views



Easy beach access via Hougharry township

Customer care support

Accessibility equipment

- Dogs have full access to the nature reserve. Ensure all excrement is picked up and removed from the reserve. There is a bin provided by a local crofter. This is situated on the fence outside the visitor centre.

Guide last updated: 9 March 2018