



RAF Manston Accessibility guide.

General

The museum is mostly within a group of adjoined hangar s with exhibits across two levels. The upper level is accessible via fourteen wooden steps (with handrail) or a ramp that also has handrails.

If you have mobility issues, we recommend using the ramp to view the upper level before returning to ground level to see the exhibits on the lower level. If you have sight issues, we suggest you go up the stairs at reception. This is the usual entry point for our visitors.

There are multiple exhibit rooms and display areas as well as extensive exhibits outside the hangar s to the front and side of the museum.

Aircraft and exhibits can be awkward shapes. Please look out for warning signs, bright plastic chains, and bollards for your protection.

We have a 1940's exhibition area where loud sounds including air raid sirens and aircraft might be intimidating for some visitors. This area has low lighting also. Throughout the museum we have mannequins that might be disconcerting.

This area can be quickly passed through on the way to the upper levels via the ramp.

During the year special events take place such as our Open Cockpit where those with disabilities may find entering and leaving aircraft to be very difficult. Access to other vehicles such as Fire engines and tanks may also need careful consideration. These events are usually very busy, and you may wish to consider coming on another day to see the exhibits more clearly.

At events, our volunteers will be on hand to ensure your safety.

We are a disability confident employer and believe that we have made every effort to make the museum accessible to all. Care should be taken as you pass around exhibits in smaller areas.

Fire and Safety

There are many fire exits throughout the museum usually on the outside walls. Please look out for signage.

The shop staff will advise if there is an emergency.

Our assembly point is on the grass area at the front of the museum opposite the NAAFI building.

Parking

Please use our own car park – this is on the taxiway on Manston Road heading towards Ramsgate. Not the one between us and the Spitfire and Hurricane Museum.

It is one hundred and seventy-five metres from the farthest point of the car park to the shop entrance.



Parking to Entrance-

Our car park is in the bottom right of the picture and the path can be clearly seen.

We have a short uneven pathway that is currently unlit.

This path is gravel and is easily accessible with care and wheelchair users have not reported any issues.

Entrance and shop

This is the entrance to the Museum and our shop.

Please use the double doors and enter via the right-hand door to enter our shop to pay for entry.



This is an open bright and open area which leads towards both the stairs and the ramp: both of which go to the upper level of the museum.



This is the entrance to the NAAFI café opposite the entrance to museum. As you can see in summer months it is possible to eat outside on the many external tables.

See page 30 for more information on this part of the museum.

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The first picture is the view as you enter and the second is the area where payment for entry takes place. As well as payment for shop goods.

If you plan to use the ramp, pass these steps on your left before turning left along the corridor.



Able bodied visitors usually start their tour by using these steps to the upper level before coming down to the lower levels via the ramp mentioned later.



Corridor to Hangar one

This corridor is level. Turn right at the end of this corridor and you are in hangar one.



This is the end of the corridor looking across to where the 1940's experience and ramp to the upper floor.

This is the first large area of aircraft cockpits and associated equipment.

Pass through the doorway and keep moving forward and you will see the armoury and 1940's exhibition ahead of as you pass aircraft on your left and model tanks on the floor.



The dark area in the background is the way to the ramp and upper levels. As you move towards the ramp and upper level you will pass a depiction of a 1940's house. This is opposite the armoury section.



There is aircraft seating for three by the Victor which is the brown aircraft at the back of the hangar. On the left of this photograph.



The armoury is on the way through to the upper levels before the ramp.



The 1940's experience and squadron office are opposite the entry to hangar one from the corridor leading away from reception on the ground floor. Also, opposite to the armoury.



This image is the Squadron Office looking back towards hangar one.

Ramp to upper floor after passing through the dimly lit 1940's experience.

This is accessible via a short ramp of three stages- the first part is the steepest but is just four metres long before the second part which is a gentle rise.



This is the first part of the ramp to the upper levels which is accessed through hangar one and the 1940' experience.



At the top of the first part of the ramp is a gentle slope up a corridor that has a photographic archive showing the history of the airport. The path is narrow but easy to use. You then pass a mezzanine view of the exhibits in hangar one before moving along the path that takes you to an open area called the Civil aerospace area.



This is the Civil Aerospace section that is at the end of the ramp.

There is seating for five people with seats from an airport departure lounge with metal arm rests. These are quite low. There is space in this area to park wheelchairs to rest on your way round.



The upper floor continues towards the railway and model section.

From the window on the right, you will be able to see external exhibits.

On the left you will be able to look over the exhibits in hangar one.



At the end of the corridor in the previous section, the door to the Railway Gallery is located.



On the other side of the steps there is a large display of model aircraft. More historic military paraphernalia is available in the cabinet above the models and on the walls.

Go back past the top of the stairs and retrace your steps shop you to the bottom of the ramp to visit the remaining exhibits and hangar s.

Coming back down to the ground level you can tour the three main hangar s. You may have seen hangar one from upstairs if you came via the stairs or the ramp. Now you can look at the exhibits before moving onto other areas,

You can clearly see the aircraft seats that you see as you leave hangar one.



Hangar Two

There is an accessible toilet within the NAAFI Café. There are other toilets in hangar two and one of those is accessible and has a baby changing facility. The toilets are well sign posted. Turn right as you enter hangar two and they are in front of you at the end of a small pathway.

At the back of hangar two there is a small room called the Uniform room. The room is well lit but compact.

You may wish to wait until this is free from other visitors to enable wheelchairs to move easily around the central display.



This is a view of hangar two taken from the upper level.



The Uniform room is in one corner of hangar two.



There is a small rest and play area as well as seating for younger visitors. There are also six seats for adults in a location nearby.

Hangar Three

In this hangar there are several historic Aircraft Simulators. When being used these can be noisy. These are usually only operational for events.

You pass the yellow Wessex helicopter on your left as you move into hangar three.





Our Meteor and Chipmunk are clearly visible as you enter Hangar three.



Above you can see the back of the Meteor and in front of you our Buccaneer cockpit in Hangar three. You can enter Hangar three by passing the tail of the Wessex helicopter or by passing the front of the Wessex.

There are eight metal steps up to the Buccaneer then one more at a right angle before you can see into the cockpit.

Moving outside to our External aircraft

Most aircraft are not open but are few are on event days or when group tours are arranged.



The Tornado is the first aircraft on the left as you leave Hangar one. There are six wide wooden steps to climb to see inside the cockpit.



The next set of aircraft as you leave Hangar one to go outside – Our Lightning, Iskra, and Jet Provost.



Our Nimrod has fifteen large wide metal steps to climb if you intend to look inside. The entry door is quite small, and lighting inside is quite low. This will only be open if volunteers are able to look after you. Most aircraft outside are not accessible at any time.

Access is not recommended for those with mobility issues as the aircraft corridors are very narrow inside.



Moving beyond the Nimrod you will see the Buccaneer and Jaguar aircraft.

Hangar four

This hangar contains our collection of aircraft engines.

Access is via a large door. Watch out for the small ramp at the bottom when entering and leaving.



NAAFI Café

You need to exit the museum to enter the NAAFI café.

Why not extend your visit with a snack or lunch?

Entry is via the left-hand door of the large white doors opposite the museum conservatory.

Menus are on the table, and ordering takes place at the counter.

Waiting staff bring food to your table.

The toilet in this area is an accessible one in a corridor at the back of the café.

Staff will help you if you have difficulty reading our menus.



Emporium

Behind our café is a small emporium stocked with unique gifts from local designers. This is on the same level as the café.

You may wish to wait until this is free from other visitors to enable wheelchairs to move easily around the central display.



Thank you for visiting us.

After your visit, please feel free to suggest changes that might improve visits for others.

Please leave us a review on either Trustpilot or Google if you can.

If you have any feedback on this guide or the museum itself, please give that to our shop team.