

Visitor Access Information

Address: Raby Castle, Raby Park, Staindrop, Darlington, Co Durham, DL2 3AH

The Castle is situated in 200 acres of undulating parkland in a countryside location. A member of the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme, Raby Park and Gardens are wheelchair accessible, however we advise that wheelchair users are accompanied by able pushers. Due to its medieval structure, disabled access to much of the Castle is limited; however there is a DVD presentation with subtitles, on the ground floor in a level access area for those who are unable to access all of the public areas.

Distance from nearby Villages, Towns and Cities:

Staindrop – 1 mile

Cockfield – 2.5 miles

Barnard Castle – 8 miles

Bishop Auckland – 8.5 miles

Darlington – 13.5 miles

Durham City -18.5 miles

Pre-Arrival

- The entrance to Raby Castle, Park & Gardens is approximately 1 mile/1.6km from Staindrop Village directly off a main Road, the A688.
- The nearest mainline railway station is Darlington and is approximately 13.7 miles/22km from Raby Castle.
- United Taxis of Darlington have accessible vehicles and they can be contacted on 01325 282855.
- There is a bus stop approximately 197ft/60m from the main entrance.
- If travelling by bus you should alight at Raby Castle, North Lodge.
- The following bus services, service this stop:
 - Scarlet Band Route 85A runs between the towns of Darlington, Bishop Auckland, Barnard Castle and Cockfield village approximately every 2 hours.
- If travelling from Durham Arriva bus service 6, runs from Durham, via Bishop Auckland to Cockfield every half an hour, then transfer to bus 85A onto Raby Castle.
- Arriva Bus Service 75 travels between Darlington and Barnard Castle via Staindrop once every hour, then either walk to Raby Castle or transfer to service 85 travelling to Bishop Auckland.
- Please check www.travelinenortheast.info or call 0871 200 2233 for up to date public transport information.

Car Parking & Arrival

- There is a level tarmac road leading through the main gates, over a cattle grid, which leads up to a pay kiosk on the right hand side.
- There is a pedestrian gate at the side of the cattle grid allowing safe access for those travelling on foot. Those travelling in cars can pull up to the kiosk without having to get out, to purchase their admission tickets.
- The ticket kiosk is outdoors and therefore benefits from natural lighting.
- There is an open window at car level, where tickets and money are exchanged.

- There is no hearing loop system in the attraction; however the ticket kiosk can offer paper and a pen for communicating.
- All parking is free in the castle grounds.
- Two designated parking areas for Blue Badge holders are outside the Castle entrance (during castle opening times only). The Coach Yard outside the Gift Shop and Tearooms can also be used for disabled parking.
- Admissions staff can direct you to where to park.
- Visitors who are driving disabled friends/family who wish to visit the Castle are asked to drop off their guests at the portcullis and return their car to the main car park.
- The main car park is a flat, well – drained and maintained grass field, approximately 300m/980ft from the Coach Yard, where the main visitor facilities are.
- The castle itself is approx. 300m/1300ft from the main car park, up a natural incline along a level tarmac approach.
- There are two benches along the approach to the castle to rest on.
- The Castle gates open automatically and always wide open during normal opening hours.
- Those accompanying wheelchair users will need to be strong and able pushers.
- There are three steps with a hand rail leading into the Castle to begin the tour. An alternative level access entrance is straight across the Courtyard which leads into the Entrance Hall.
- The doors into the Entrance Hall are large, ceiling height wooden double doors, they are 248cm/8’11” wide and they open manually inwards. There will normally be a member of staff to open to doors to allow visitors inside.

Wheelchair Loan

- Wheelchairs are available for free loan from the Castle Entrance Hall for use inside and the Coach Houses for use in the grounds and gardens.
- There are a limited number of wheelchairs, which can be booked in advance to ensure availability.

The Castle

- Due to its Grade I listed nature and medieval structure, wheelchair access is limited inside the Castle.
- The castle can be viewed by a guided tour from a member of staff or by walking around the marked route on your own.
- Parts of the castle ground floor are wheelchair accessible and there is a level access DVD presentation viewing area, which includes subtitles showing the interior of the castle situated on the ground floor in the Entrance Hall.
- There are room notes containing detailed information in each room, large print versions of these are available and the DVD presentation in the Entrance Hall has subtitles.
- There are sets of three and four steps to access the whole of the ground floor.
- There are 41 steps leading to the upstairs.
- There is seating in many of the rooms inside the castle to rest on.
- The use of mobile phones is not permitted inside the Castle.
- Assistance dogs are welcome.
- There are two toilets but no accessible toilets inside the Castle, the main toilets and accessible toilets are in the Coach Yard area near the tearooms, which are 450m/492yards from the Castle.
- Those who are unable to access the whole of the Castle can still be admitted to the Castle with a Park & Gardens ticket.

- For conservation reasons pushchairs may be asked to be left (at the owners risk) in the Entrance Hall.
- For conservation and security reasons those with large rucksacks may be asked to carry them on their front.

The Gardens

- The Gardens are situated on a natural slope.
- Paths are surfaced with gravel and most steps have handrails.
- Wheelchairs users may need assistance from a strong and able pusher.

Deer Park

- Roads within the deer park are surfaced with tarmac.
- The landscape is grassy and undulating, please wear sensible footwear.

Accessible WCs

- Accessible WCs are located 300ft/90m from the Tearooms entrance.
- Accessible WCs are unisex and there are baby changing facilities and nappy disposal in the left hand cubicle.
- Other baby changing facilities are located in the main ladies WCs at the end of the Coach Yard.
- There are limited WC facilities inside the Castle and there are no accessible WCs.
- The accessible WCs are a stand-alone building which is always open and unlocked during opening times; **please note they are not near the main WCs.**
- A wide tarmac road leads to them up a slight incline. A level concrete path with a width of 53"/1.34m leads into the toilets where there is an entrance lobby with a bench seat and two large accessible toilet cubicles.
- The entrance to the WCs is level and the width of the entrance door is 27"/94cm.
- The doors have a lever handle and are inward opening and light.
- There is space for a wheelchair at either side of both WCs, the width either side of the WCs are: 26"/66cm, the left hand side cubicle is slightly larger.
- The height of the WC from floor to seat is 54cm/21".
- There is an adaptable horizontal to vertical grab rail on either side of the WC and a vertical grab rail at either side of the sink.
- There are hot and cold lever taps on the sink.
- The height of the sink from the floor is 35"/88cm.
- There is a red alarm pull cord at the side of the WC and near the door, which sounds an alarm outside should anyone need assistance.
- Fluorescent ceiling lighting is used and the flooring is non-slip tiling.

Tearooms

- The tearoom is located in the Coach Yard, which is approximately 100m/300ft from the main car park and 250m/800ft from the castle entrance.
- The approach to the Shop and tearooms is on a traditional paving, which can be a little uneven; there are also some areas of cobbles in the Coach Yard, which have been filled in in between to provide a more even surface.

- The entrance doors to the Tearoom are double outward opening doors with a lever handle. The double width of the doors is 1.20m/47", if only one side of the door is opened the width is 60cm/23".
- There is a step of height 13cm/5" into the tearooms.
- Level access to the Tearoom is via the Gift Shop door (same width as tearooms doors), as the Gift Shop adjoins the Tearoom inside.
- There is clear signage near the Tearooms door directing visitors to the Level access entrance. There is also signage locating the Tearoom and its opening times on the door.
- The flooring is level throughout with short pile carpet tiles covering the floor.
- Some of the tables are constructed within the old horses stalls, therefore space for wheelchairs and pushchairs is limited in between tables due to the structure of the Tearoom.

Gift Shop

- There is first aid located at the shop and tearooms.

Coach House

- The Coach House is wheelchair accessible.
- Wheelchairs are available to loan from the Coach House.
- There is a member of staff in the Coach House at all times to provide assistance.

Photography

- Photography and filming for personal use only is permitted in the grounds and gardens.
- No photography or filming is permitted inside the Castle.
- Permission for commercial photography or filming must be gained in advance.

Dogs

- Dogs must be kept on a short lead at all times and are not permitted in the walled gardens, play area or inside buildings.
- Assistance dogs only are permitted inside the Castle.

Under 16's

- Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times while on site at Raby.
- Please supervise children at all times, especially near the ponds, in the gardens and adventure playground.

First Aid

- Please ask any member of staff who will call for First Aid.
- There are qualified first aiders in the Castle, Walled Gardens, Shop and Tearooms.

We look forward to welcoming you to Raby, for further details please contact the Administration Office on 01833 660202 or e-mail admin@rabycastle.com Please telephone in advance if you have any special requirements, so that we can offer assistance to make your visit as enjoyable as possible.