

ACCESS STATEMENT FOR FORD & ETAL ESTATES

INTRODUCTION

Ford & Etal is a traditional, working estate covering approx. 16,000 acres of countryside which can be accessed via footpaths and bridleways, and within which there are a number of visitor attractions offering a range of educational and fun activities for all ages and abilities. Ford & Etal Estates aims to provide a high quality experience to all our visitors by giving our visitors such a warm welcome and enjoyable experience that they will leave with good memories, return for further visits and recommend Ford & Etal to others. Taking time to talk to visitors is key to achieving this aim, and visitors are greeted by telephone and in person by staff who are committed to providing excellent customer service.

PRE-ARRIVAL

A clearly worded leaflet describing main facilities, attractions, directions, opening times and to which venues an admission charge applies. Included in the leaflet are our contact telephone numbers, email and web site addresses, and a map showing the location of Ford & Etal. The leaflet is widely distributed to other tourism venues, accommodation providers, Tourist Information Centres and caravan parks.

Additional leaflets are also produced by some of the individual attractions e.g. Heatherslaw Light Railway, Lady Waterford Hall.

Printed information is available in French, German, Dutch and Swedish on request.

Ford & Etal is accessible by car:-

From the North by the A1: via the B6354 approx. 12 miles south of Berwick-upon-Tweed: follow signs from the A1 to Ford & Etal.

From the North by the A697: signposted for Ford & Etal approximately 6 miles south of Coldstream.

From the South by the A1: Take the B6353, via Fenwick and Lowick, follow the signs for Ford & Etal.

From the South by the A697: Situated on the B6354 approximately 8 miles north of Wooler - follow the signs for Ford & Etal.

The local bus service (267) runs between Wooler and Berwick, stopping at Ford & Etal. (NB there is no bus service on Sundays/Bank Holidays).

The nearest railway station is in Berwick-upon-Tweed, approximately 10 miles from Ford & Etal Estates.

All the above information and more details about Ford & Etal Estates can be found on our website www.ford-and-etale.co.uk

Telephone, fax and email – please see contact details below.

ARRIVAL & CAR PARKING FACILITIES INCLUDING MAIN ENTRANCE & RECEPTION

Visitors can arrive at a number of points on the Estates and there is not therefore one main entrance or reception area. However visitors are encouraged to make Heatherslaw Visitor Centre their first point of call.

Car parking is free throughout the Estates and is accessible to the disabled, with designated disabled parking spaces at certain locations (see below for details).

Ford Village:

Parking is available directly outside venues, on the road side. There is also a tarmac lay-by on the opposite side to Ford Shop, with parking for several cars – the road/lay-by is on a moderate slope down towards the bottom of the village. There are no steps leading into the following: Ford Nursery – accessed by a gravel path and with level pathways throughout; Lady Waterford Hall – accessed by a concrete ramp and all at ground floor level; Public Toilets – accessed by flagstone paths. There is one step leading into Ford shop, the outside area and patio being accessed by a flagstone path with gradual incline. John Marrin Rare Books has one step at entrance to pathway and two steps up to the door, with space inside the building fairly limited.

Heatherslaw:

There are gravel car parks, one at Heatherslaw Railway (flat surface with parking adjacent to ticket office but no designated disabled spaces) and two at Heatherslaw Cornmill, with 21 steps leading down to road next to Mill/Visitor Centre. There is also designated disabled parking adjacent to the Visitor Centre with space for two cars.

Heatherslaw Railway: The ticket office/shop is wheelchair accessible – entry and exit through same door. The train has some wheelchair accessible carriages - please telephone before visiting (01890 820244) in case there are other wheelchair users booked for that day.

Heatherslaw Cornmill, Tearoom and Gift Shop: are located in the original Mill building, a listed building that can only be accessed by stone steps. There are 7 steps leading into the Shop/Mill; 5 steps down to outside entrance and 10 steps up to Tearoom. The Mill itself is spread over 3 floors, accessed via open wooden staircases with handrails fixed to the wall.

Heatherslaw Visitor Centre: has a double door that opens to allow wheelchair access. The Visitor Centre is at ground floor level and has full disabled access. For those unable to access the Mill building there is a DVD presentation with details about Ford & Etal Estates and Heatherslaw Mill – volume can be adjusted to suit. There are also interpretation boards. Visitors can be served the full Tearoom menu in the Visitor Centre – low tables and chairs are provided.

Etal

There are two public car parks in the village – one behind Jan's Plants/Village Hall and the other adjacent to Etal Castle; both are gravelled and level. There is a designated disabled parking bay for Village Hall users. On-street parking is available throughout the village and the Black Bull has a car park for pub patrons.

There is a tarmac footpath down one side of the village. The path from the train terminus at Etal follows a moderate slope up towards Etal Castle with a wooden handrail all the way. There is a small step at the gate through to Etal Castle.

PUBLIC AREAS – WC

There are WCs in each village.

Ford Village has public toilets open early March to end of October. Currently there is one gents (one step down onto path to gents) and one ladies WC with wash basin but no disabled access: the toilets are due to be upgraded summer 2008 to provide disabled access.

Lady Waterford Hall (open early March to end of October) has one gents and two ladies WCs located at ground floor level. Each cubicle is fitted with wall-mounted support rails but is not wheelchair accessible. There is one wash basin to serve the ladies WCs and one to serve the gents.

There is no alarm call system.

Baby changing facilities are available – please ask staff.

Heatherslaw (*adjacent to Visitor Centre*) has two gents and two ladies WCs open early March to end of October; one each of gents and ladies cubicles is disabled and wheelchair accessible with assistance – door width is 87 cm; toilet seat height 43 cm washbasin height 89 cm. Each disabled cubicle has one horizontal support rail beside the toilet, at 93 cm high.

There are also toilets on the upper floor of Heatherslaw Tearoom. These are not accessible to the disabled but do offer baby changing facilities.

Etal Village has public toilets in the car park adjacent to Etal Castle; these are open early March to end of October. There is one gents, one ladies and one disabled-accessible cubicle, the latter being wheelchair accessible via a concrete ramp from the car park. The door is 87 cm wide with a handrail at 103 cm on the inside of the door, a horizontal handrail at 82 cm to the left of the WC and in front of the wash basin. The toilet seat is 53 cm high.

There is no alarm call system and there are no baby changing facilities –baby changing facilities are however available in the Black Bull, Etal.

OUTSIDE AREAS AND GROUNDS

A number of footpaths, bridleways and permissive paths criss-cross the Estates land. Maps of the most-used paths can be purchased at Heatherslaw Gift Shop, Etal Post Office and Lady Waterford Hall. As these paths run through fields and moorland many parts of them are not wheelchair accessible or suitable for those with walking difficulties. Staff are however always happy to give advice.

Fishing permits can be purchased from the Estate Office (01890 820224) and Ford Post Office (01890 820230).

Route 68 Berwick-Derbyshire national cycle route passes through the Estates and there is a dedicated, off-road section running from Tindall House to Etal Village (approx 2 miles, some hills) and from Slainsfield road end to Heatherslaw (approx ½ mile, level). These paths are used by walkers and cyclists and are accessible to wheelchair users.

A number of cycle route maps are available from the Visitor Centre, where cycle hire is also offered. Cycle racks are situated at Heatherslaw Mill.

Wooden picnic benches are located by Heatherslaw Tearoom, Heatherslaw Railway and Etal Castle. Bench seats are located in Ford Village, adjacent to lay-by, opposite Lady Waterford Hall and in the play park (which has a baby swing and a flat seat swing), situated just past John Marrin Rare Books. There is also a bench seat outside Etal Castle and two outside Etal Village Hall.

Grass areas in all the villages are regularly mown and available to the public as play/picnic areas - these include the paddock at Heatherslaw Mill, the area below Taylor and Green and adjacent to river in Etal, the area outside Etal Village Hall, the areas opposite Lady Waterford Hall in Ford.

'You are here' map boards are located adjacent to the lay-by and outside Lady Waterford Hall in Ford; at Heatherslaw Railway and Heatherslaw Mill sites; outside Etal Village Hall, Etal public toilets and on path coming from Railway in Etal.

Litter bins are available in Etal, Heatherslaw and Ford villages; dog waste bins are located at Heatherslaw adjacent to the public toilets and in Ford.

RETAIL

Ford – there are souvenirs, leaflets and items for sale in Lady Waterford Hall near to the entrance. Ford Village Shop/Post Office has a step into the building and limited space inside.

Heatherslaw – The Gift Shop at Heatherslaw Mill is upstairs (Mill entrance); items made by local craftsmen can be purchased from the Visitor Centre. The Gift Shop staff will also, upon request, take to the Visitor Centre a range of gifts and souvenirs

to choose from for anyone unable to access the shop. The railway ticket office offers gifts and souvenirs for sale.

Etal – Etal Castle shop is at ground floor level. Etal Shop/Post Office has a step into the building but can be accessed by wheelchair by following the path from the outside seating area to the back door.

REFRESHMENTS

Ford – teas are available on the patio outside Ford Shop – this is accessible via a flagstone path on a slight incline.

Heatherslaw – Tearoom is not disabled-accessible but serves full menu in the Visitor Centre on request – please ask Visitor Centre or Tearoom staff.

Etal – There is a step down into the Black Bull. Etal Shop/Tearoom serves refreshments inside and outside where there are tables and staff are happy to assist where required.

ATTRACTIONS

Lady Waterford Hall, Heatherslaw Mill and Etal Castle have their own guidebooks which can be purchased in the venues themselves. Heatherslaw Railway publishes a timetable detailing train times and prices. Please contact individual venues for access advice.

Lady Waterford Hall is all at ground floor level; Heatherslaw Mill is accessed by steps and is spread over three floors; the Visitor Centre is at ground floor level; Heatherslaw Railway is accessible to the disabled; Etal Castle exhibition area is at ground floor level.

CONFERENCE AND MEETING ROOMS

Lady Waterford Hall and Etal Village Hall are both available to hire – contact 01890 820503 (Lady Waterford Hall) or 01890 820566 (Etal Village Hall)

ACCOMMODATION

There are a number of bed and breakfast establishments and self-catering cottages on Ford & Etal Estates – see leaflet or website for contact details/further information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In all cases staff are on hand to offer assistance.

Service dogs are welcome in most venues but due to health and hygiene regulations are not permitted in Heatherslaw Cornmill.

Water bowls are provided for dogs on the Heatherslaw Mill site, at Etal Castle and at Etal Shop/Tearooms.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: Ford & Etal Estates, Heatherslaw Visitor Centre,
Cornhill-on-Tweed, TD12 4TJ

Telephone: 01890 820338

Fax: 01890 820384

Email: tourism@ford-and-etal.co.uk

Website: www.ford-and-etal.co.uk

National Rail: Berwick-upon-Tweed Station (0845 7225225)
(East Coast Mainline–National Express 08717 818181; www.nationalexpress.com)

Local Bus: Glen Valley Tours (01668 281578)

We welcome your feedback to help us continually improve. If you have any comments please telephone 01890 820338 or e-mail tourism@ford-and-etal.co.uk

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