

## Accessibility Guide for Ford & Etal Estates

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[www.ford-and-etal.co.uk](http://www.ford-and-etal.co.uk)



### Welcome

Ford & Etal is a traditional working estate covering approximately 16,000 acres of countryside which can be accessed via public and permissive footpaths and bridleways, and within which there are a number of visitor attractions and activities offering a range of educational and leisure pursuits for all ages and abilities. Ford & Etal Estates aims to provide a high quality experience to all our visitors by giving them 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 the time to talk to visitors is key to achieving this aim, and we endeavour to ensure that visitors are greeted by telephone and in person by staff committed to providing excellent customer service.

Due to the nature of the estates some locations and venues are not accessible to all. We hope that this guide provides the information that you require however please contact us if you require any further information or advice on planning your visit. We will assist as far as we can although it may be necessary for you to contact individual venues about specific access issues.

We strive to continually improve our visitor services and welcome your feedback to help us with this. If you have any comments please get in touch by telephone or email. Please note however that most of the attractions and businesses operating on the estate are independent enterprises over which the Estates have no direct management control.

## **Getting here**

### **Visitor Centre**

Heatherslaw  
Cornhill-on-Tweed  
Northumberland  
TD12 4TJ

### **Ford Village**

Berwick-upon-Tweed  
Northumberland  
TD15 2QG

### **Etal Village**

Cornhill-on-Tweed  
Northumberland  
TD12 4TN

### **Hay Farm**

Cornhill-on-Tweed  
Northumberland  
TD12 4TR

## **Travel by Car**

Ford & Etal Estates are:

- 30 minutes (12 miles) south-west of Berwick-upon-Tweed
- 20 minutes (8 miles) north of Wooler
- 45 min (25 miles) north of Alnwick
- 1hr 15 min (60 miles) north of Newcastle

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

From the North by the A697 Follow the brown signs for Ford & Etal approximately 6 miles south of Coldstream.

From the South by the A1 Follow the brown signs from the A1/B6353 Fenwick junction for approximately 9 miles.

From the South by the A697 Follow the brown signs after Milfield, turning off at the B6354.

## **Cycle Route 68**

Sustrans Cycle Route 68 (Berwick-upon-Tweed to Derbyshire) passes through the estate. Cycle racks are located at Heatherslaw Mill, outside Lady Waterford Hall in Ford and at Lavender Tearooms in Etal.

## **Public Transport**

- Bus service 267 (Border Buses) operates between Berwick-upon-Tweed and Wooler, stopping at Etal, Heatherslaw and Ford. This is a limited service and there are no buses on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- The nearest railway station is Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- Taxis can be pre-booked with Border Villager (tel 01668 482888; email [scott@bordervillagertaxi.co.uk](mailto:scott@bordervillagertaxi.co.uk))

## **Arrival**

The Ford & Etal leaflet describes the main facilities, attractions, travel directions, opening times/dates and where an admission charge applies. This leaflet is widely distributed to other tourism venues, including holiday accommodation, camp sites and Tourist Information Centres and so it can be viewed prior to visiting. More detailed information can be found on our website, our social media channels and in the individual leaflets produced by some of the attractions, e.g. Heatherslaw Light Railway; Lady Waterford Hall & Heatherslaw Cornmill; Hay Farm Heavy Horse

Centre; Handmade at Heatherslaw. There is a guide to the history of the area *Ford and Etal: Glimpses from bygone days* which can be purchased from local venues.

Explore our website to find out more about what there is to see and do in the villages of Ford, Etal and the hamlet of Heatherslaw. There is a Visitor Centre at Heatherslaw so this is a useful first point of call to obtain information about all there is to see and do.

Estates signage is green on a cream background and indicates the location of attractions, toilets etc. as well as demarcating areas which are not open to the public, such as private houses and gardens. There are also a number of brown tourist signs. Large map boards (not to scale) showing the location of places to visit can be found in Etal, Heatherslaw and Ford.

## **Parking**

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).



*Car parking in Ford*



*Car park east of river, Heatherslaw*



*Car park adjacent Etal Castle*

### **Etal:**

There are two public car parks in the village – one behind the Village Hall and the other adjacent to Etal Castle; both are graveled and level. There is a designated disabled parking bay for Village Hall users. Please use these car parks wherever possible.

### **Ford Village:**

Parking is available directly outside all venues, on the road side. There is also a tarmac lay-by on the opposite side of the road to Ford Shop, with marked parking bays including one blue-badge holder space. The road/lay-by is on a moderately steep slope, downhill towards Lady Waterford Hall. The Old Dairy has its own car park.

### **Heatherslaw:**

There are two car parks with deep gravel on the east side of the river, accessed from the B6354: one at Heatherslaw Railway (flat surface with parking adjacent to ticket office), and one adjacent to the railway car park (flat surface with 15 parking spaces). The iron bridge leading across to the Mill and Visitor Centre from the car parks is for pedestrian and bicycle use only.



*Bridge leading to Heatherslaw Cornmill*

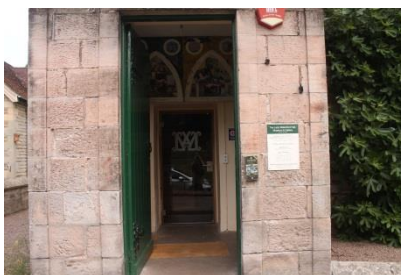
The walk from the car park across the bridge to Heatherslaw Cornmill is approximately 200 metres. There are 4 bollards at each end of the bridge to prevent vehicles crossing; these are in a diamond layout which provides a 1.7metre gap (suitable for push chairs and wheelchairs). The bridge is covered with a non-slip decking, designating a cycle lane and pedestrian lane. The bridge can be used by wheelchairs and mobility scooters. There are two designated disabled car parking spaces adjacent to Heatherslaw Visitor Centre; these are accessed from the B6353 at the T-junction which displays a 'No Through Road' sign. Turn into this road and follow it for about a mile until arrival at the Heatherslaw Mill site. Visitors are advised to telephone in advance if they have any queries about this access. There are also two car parks behind the Visitor Centre which can be used by visitors to the Estates.

## **Venue Information – Ford Village**

### **Lady Waterford Hall**



*Ramped access to Lady Waterford Hall*



*Entrance lobby & glass door*



*Interpretation panels*

The Hall is a Grade II\* Listed Building and a registered Museum at ground floor level, accessed from the pavement by a concrete path and gently sloping ramp. There is a glass door 90cm wide with contrasting markings in the centre. There is a fully accessible WC with automatic light and grab rail on inside of door at 70cm. The wash hand basin is 84cm high with 'touch free' tap and grab rails at either side; toilet height 47cm; moveable double horizontal rail to right of toilet at 70cm high (top rail) and vertical handrail fixed to wall to left of toilet at 70cm. Electric hand drier at 1m 12cm.

There is no hearing loop in the Hall. Interpretation panels are fixed on the wall at standing eye level; there are sloping panels in the centre of the Hall 110cm high. There is an audio-visual presentation about the history of Ford and Lady Waterford which is shown on request. This is not sub-titled. The floor in the main hall is wooden boards; in the ante-room it is carpet. In the toilets and linking vestibule there is a non-slip floor covering.



*Ticket counter, Lady Waterford Hall*



*Retail area, Lady Waterford Hall*

The Hall has a small retail area selling a range of gifts, cards, souvenirs, biscuits etc. There are a range of pamphlets and books about Louisa Waterford/her artwork. The Hall is also available for private hire – contact [ladywaterfordhall@gmail.com](mailto:ladywaterfordhall@gmail.com) or telephone 07971 326177.

## **Ford Village Shop/Sub-Post Office/Tearoom**

There is one step into the shop area and a further two steps into the Tearoom. A ramp to access the shop is available on request. Refreshments are served inside and outside on the patio where there are tables and chairs. Access from the road is via a flagstone path which joins the village footpath. There is a dropped kerb from the road below the shop.



*Dropped kerb – main street below Ford Shop*



*Entrance path to Ford Shop*

There is one small WC for use by patrons of the tearoom. This is not disabled accessible. The Sub-Post Office is open Monday-Friday 0830-1230. There is a defibrillator on the outside wall of the shop.

## **The Estate House Tearoom**

There is one step at the front door into the Tearoom. There is disabled access to the main garden which is open for guests when weather permits. There are toilets for customer use but no disabled accessible WC.

## **The Old Dairy/Restoration Coffee Shop**

Located outside the centre of the village on Ford Bank, there is wheelchair access from the main car park via a small road past the dairy buildings from which all buildings and the summer house (adjacent to coffee shop) can be accessed. There are toilets for customer use but these are not wheelchair accessible.

## **The Old Forge**

Ground floor level access from the street, space inside is very limited.



*Entrance to The Old Forge*

## **Accommodation in Ford**

The Estate House and Ford Village Shop offer Bed & Breakfast accommodation. This is not wheelchair accessible.

## Children's Play Park

There is a playpark in Ford located down the hill past the Old Forge on the left. There is a Spider Log Climber, a Thumper Tower, a Log Basket Swing, a Time out Trail and Nursery Swings.



## Venue Information – Etal Village

### **Etal Castle**

The entrance, shop and exhibition area is at ground floor level with flat access from outside. The castle offers an audio tour. The grounds of the castle are grassed and, whilst accessible, care should be taken as some areas are rough, and grass can be slippery in wet weather. Etal Castle has its own guidebook. It does not have WC facilities – nearest toilets in adjacent car park.

### **Heatherslaw Railway Terminus at Etal**

There is a moderately steep sloped path, uneven in places, from the terminus to Etal Castle. There is a wooden handrail on one side all the way along the path. At the gate through to Etal Castle there is a tarmac ramp and some uneven cobble stones.



*Path from Heatherslaw Railway Terminus to Etal Castle*

### **Etal Shop/Sub-Post Office/Lavender Tearooms**

Access from the street is level. There is a step into the building. A ramp to access the shop and tearoom is available on request. The Sub-Post Office is open Monday-Thursday 0900-1300. Refreshments are served inside and outside where there is a large paved area to the front of the building with a level access. There are toilets (not wheelchair accessible) and baby changing facilities for patrons of the Lavender Tearooms.



*Tea Garden, Lavender Tearooms*

*Entrance from road, Etal Shop/Tearoom*

## **The Black Bull**

There is a designated disabled parking bay to the front of the Black Bull. There is a dropped kerb and the entrance is level, with a wide door leading into the bar area. There is a fully accessible WC in the pub's rear hall. There are two steps from the bar to the restaurant area, however the restaurant seating can be accessed from the rear of the building. A path leads from the street along the side of the pub to the beer garden and rear access.



*The Black Bull, Etal – front entrance*



*Path to rear entrance/beer garden*



*The Black Bull, Etal - rear entrance*

## **Etal Village Hall**

Etal Village Hall is available for private hire. The hall is fully accessible with a purpose-fitted accessible WC. Facilities include main hall with projector, high quality DVD player, and surround sound system; Small Hall, fully fitted catering kitchen; broadband connection with Wi-Fi; seating for up to 80; children's tables & chairs.

There is a defibrillator inside the hall and an electric car charging point outside.

## **Venue Information – Heatherslaw**

### **Heatherslaw Light Railway Station**

The ticket office/shop is wheelchair accessible – entry and exit via the station platform. The train has some accessible carriages suitable for wheelchairs and prams. It is advisable that wheelchair users telephone 01890 820244 prior to visiting in case these carriages are already booked. The Railway publishes a timetable detailing train times and prices. There are no public toilets at the station – WCs are located across the bridge on the Heatherslaw Cornmill site.



*Ticket Office/level entry to station platform    Car Park Heatherslaw Light Railway*

## Heatherslaw Cornmill & Gift Shop

The building which houses the Mill, Gift Shop and Tearoom is a Grade II\* Listed Building and a registered Museum. It is accessed by stone steps. There are seven steps with metal handrail leading to the Shop & Mill entrance. The Mill is built over three floors, access at middle floor. Basement and top floors are accessed via an open wooden staircase, even treads, eight steps in each flight, handrails on both sides.



*Heatherslaw Cornmill*



*Entrance to Mill & Gift Shop*

## Heatherslaw Tearoom

Located within the Mill building the tearoom is accessed by stone steps – five steps down with metal handrail to the entrance lobby then ten steps up with a wooden handrail. There are toilet and baby changing facilities on the top floor but these are not disabled accessible. If visitors are unable to access the tearoom then refreshments are served in the Visitor Centre opposite, or at one of the picnic tables outside. There are picnic benches outside the Tearoom and the Cornmill.

## Heatherslaw Visitor Centre

At ground floor level, the Centre is fully accessible with a double door opening to 140cm allowing wheelchair access. A ten-minute, sub-titled, audio-visual presentation about Ford & Etal Estates runs on a continuous loop. For visitors unable to access the Cornmill there is also a short film about the Mill which is available on request. Interpretation boards are mounted half way up the walls. A range of leaflets describing walks and cycle routes around the Estates and things to do in the local area are available. Visitors who are unable to access the Tearoom can be served in the Visitor Centre – table(s) and chairs are available.



*Entrance to the Visitor Centre*

## **Handmade at Heatherslaw**

There is a step up from the road onto the kerb then a level entrance into the shop, doorway 90cm wide. A ramp is available on request. NB the door is very low.



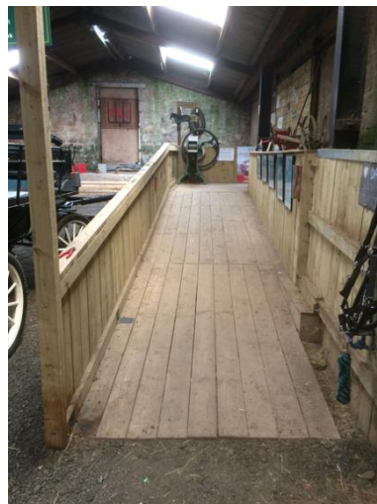
*Entrance – Handmade at Heatherslaw*

## **Venue Information – Hay Farm Heavy Horse Centre**

The outside picnic area adjacent to the horses' field is grassed but level, so accessible with care. The Centre buildings including the shop are wheelchair accessible, being at ground floor and/or accessed via a ramp. There is a car park within the Centre. Carry-out refreshments are available.



*The main stable, Hay Farm*



*The ramp to the main stable, Hay Farm*

## **Accommodation**

There are a number of bed and breakfast establishments and holiday cottages across the Estates, all run independently. Ford Bridge Campsite, a small designated camping/caravan site opened in 2020 and a glamping site is due to open in 2021. See Ford & Etal website for contact details/further information.

## **Public Areas**

### **WCs**

There are public toilets in each village (open beginning of April to end of October) and some venues have toilets for use by their own customers. There is also a portaloo cubicle (open seasonally) adjacent to Ford Moss Nature Reserve.

Heatherslaw (adjacent to Visitor Centre) has gents and ladies WC facilities (each with two cubicles) accessed from the road where there is a dropped kerb onto the concrete path. There is one cubicle in each of the gents and ladies WCs with disabled accessible. Wheelchair users can access the WCs with assistance. The 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. The ladies disabled cubicle has a fold down baby-changing table.



*WC entrances at Heatherslaw*

Etal Village has public toilets in the car park adjacent to Etal Castle. There is one gents, one ladies and one unisex disabled-accessible cubicle, the latter being wheelchair accessible via a concrete ramp from the car park. The door is 90 cm wide with a horizontal hand rail on the inside. There are two vertical rails fixed to the wall either side of the hand basin and one vertical rail to the left of the toilet, as well as a moving, double handrail 16cm to the left of the toilet, rail height 55cm bottom and 73cm top. The hand basin is 74cm high and has a cold tap and hot 'touch free' tap. The toilet seat is 47 cm high. There is no alarm call system. There are baby changing facilities (wall mounted fold-down table) in the disabled-accessible cubicle.



*Disabled accessible WC, Etal village*

### **Outside areas and Grounds**

Many footpaths, bridleways and permissive paths criss-cross the Estates land. Maps and descriptions of routes are available from Heatherslaw Visitor Centre or can be downloaded from the Ford & Etal website. These paths are clearly way-marked using colour-coded markers. All

public footpaths and bridleways are shown on OS Explorer Map 339 (Kelso, Coldstream & Lower Tweed Valley). As the paths run through fields and moorland many areas are unsuitable for those with mobility difficulties and are not generally wheelchair accessible. Staff at the Visitor Centre can advise and our other attractions and venues are also always happy to be of assistance.

Route 68 Berwick-Derby national cycle route passes through the Estate and there is a dedicated, off-road section running from Tindal 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.



*Entrance to Route 68 cycle way/footpath from Heatherslaw to Etal*

## **Fishing**

Fishing permits can be purchased from Northern Trader, Milfield (01668 216710), the Estate Office (01890 820224) and Ford Post Office (01890 820230). More information on fishing is available from the Estate Office or by contacting the Fisheries Manager between 6 & 7pm on 01668 216223. Bookings and payments for Redscar, Upper and Lower Tindal beats can also be made online at [www.fishpal.com](http://www.fishpal.com).

## **Picnics**

Wooden picnic benches are located outside Heatherslaw Tearoom, Heatherslaw Cornmill (with dropped kerb for access), Heatherslaw Railway, Etal Castle and near the river at Etal. There are also picnic benches inside the grounds of Etal Castle for visitors who have paid the English Heritage admission charge.

Bench seats are located in Ford Village, adjacent to lay-by, opposite Lady Waterford Hall, in the play park situated on the left past The Old Forge and outside Etal Village Hall.



*Picnic Benches by the river at Etal*

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 the river in Etal, the area outside Etal Village Hall, the areas opposite Lady Waterford Hall in Ford.



*The Paddock at Heatherslaw*

## **Litter**

Litter bins/dog poo bins are located at various locations in Etal and Ford villages, on the Heatherslaw Mill site and in the two car parks on the Railway side of the bridge. Please pick up your litter and dispose of it in the public bins provided.

## **Dogs**

Dogs are welcomed onto the Estate but **must** be kept on a lead at all times. Service dogs are welcome in all venues. Dogs are welcome on Heatherslaw Light Railway, at Etal Castle, at Hay Farm Heavy Horse Centre, in Lady Waterford Hall, in Ford Village Shop, the bar areas at The Blue Bell (Crookham) and The Black Bull (Etal), in Heatherslaw Gift Shop (but not inside the working mill), the Visitor Centre, Heatherslaw Tearoom and in Handmade at Heatherslaw. Dogs are also welcome in the gardens/outside areas at Lavender Tearooms, and the Estate House Tearoom.

Water bowls are provided for dogs in all villages. Biodegradable poop scoop bags are available free of charge from Heatherslaw Visitor Centre and Etal Village Shop and bins are located in Ford, Etal and at Heatherslaw. **Please pick up after your dog and dispose of waste in one of the bins provided.**



*When visiting Ford & Etal Estates please observe the Countryside Code  
(hard copies are available from the Visitor Centre or can be downloaded from our website).*

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Guide last updated: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021