

## **Ampleforth Abbey and College Access Statement**

### **Introduction**

The Abbey of St Laurence at Ampleforth is home to the largest Benedictine community in Europe. The monastic community founded Ampleforth College in 1803 after settling at Ampleforth Lodge in 1802. The Lodge was the home of Fr Anselm who was chaplain to the Fairfax family at Gilling Castle, which is now home to St Martin's Ampleforth Prep School.

The Ampleforth valley is stunningly beautiful. The Abbey is situated on a variety of levels on a private estate of over 2,000 acres within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty bounded by the North York Moors National Park.

The Abbey Church and Visitor Centre are based over one level, with external and internal ramps and guided pathways for access to the Abbey Church. A manual wheelchair and a motorised wheelchair are available for loan free of charge. You can also enjoy our visitor centre, tea room and shop selling a range of souvenirs. These are all situated on one level with step free access. If you require assistance at all during your visit, please visit main reception and the team will be available to help. Please note, Guide dogs and Hearing Aid dogs are welcome in the Visitor Centre and the Abbey Church but other pets are not. Dogs are welcome in the grounds of Ampleforth Abbey, but must be kept on a lead at all times.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance prior to your visit, please call us on 01439 766000.

### **Pre-Arrival**

For full details and maps of how to reach us, please see our website: [www.hpo.ampleforth.org.uk](http://www.hpo.ampleforth.org.uk)

The nearest bus stop is on the Top Road, at the Abbey itself. All buses are accessible and can accommodate one wheelchair. Please check the [www.stephensonsofeasingwold.co.uk](http://www.stephensonsofeasingwold.co.uk) website for timetables.

### **Car Parking and Arrival**

On arrival at Ampleforth, please use the Visitor Entrance and follow signs to the Visitors' car park.

Please do not park on the Drive since this blocks Emergency Vehicles as well as delivery lorries and refuse collection.

There are two Disabled Parking bays behind the monastery building at the lower end of the drive for short term parking.

Using the visitors map, car parks P1 and P5 have a tarmac surface with a tarmac road leading to the main entrance. Car park P2 has a gravel surface with a tarmac road leading to the main entrance. We recommend using P1.

There are steps leading to the main entrance with a handrail and a permanent ramp.

The main entrance door is manually operated and is 179cm (5ft 10) wide.

## **Main Entrance and Reception**

The main entrance and reception is situated on the ground floor with step free, level access to visitor areas throughout.

There are comfortable sofas and armchairs in this area.

The floor surface is tiled, and carpeted in Reception.

The area is evenly and well lit with down lighting.

There is a lowered section of the welcome/reception desk.

Wheelchair loan is available, free of charge, on request.

## **Abbey Church and Visitor Centre**

A free tour of the Abbey Church takes place most Thursdays at 2:15pm and takes approximately 1 hour. Please ask in Reception for further details. An Abbey guide book may be purchased at other times from reception, or from outside the Abbey Church.

Within the Abbey church, Hearing Aid loops are in place in the choir and nave of the Abbey Church and speaking venues and can be activated on request.

The Visitor Centre is located in the east end of Alban Roe House and is fully accessible.

The Visitor Centre has display panels, an interactive quiz, audio pieces and a film, together with a mouse hunt for younger children. All display boards can be accessed from a sitting or standing position.

Display panels are all in large text, and have pictorial representation where applicable. All are at a maximum top height of 213cm (7ft). Braille is not currently available on any of the boards.

The floor surface is tiled or carpeted in the Visitors Centre and even stone in the Abbey Church.

The Abbey Church is fully accessible with ramps and stairs with handrails on both sides.

Lighting is generally bright and evenly lit, however some areas of the Abbey Church are more dimly lit. The Abbey Crypt is not accessible with wheelchairs.

Seating is available in both the Abbey Church and Visitor Centre.

## **Public Toilets**

Public toilets are located on the lower ground floor with access via stairs from the main entrance, reception and tea room areas.

A unisex accessible toilet is located on the lower ground floor, accessed via the outside entrance, and one to the left of the Abbey Church, accessed from the main entrance, and is described below:

A light, easy open door 91cm (3ft) wide

102cm (3ft 4) transfer space

The toilet height is 40cm

There are vertical rails either side of both basin and toilet.

There is a horizontal rail on the side wall adjacent to the toilet.

The toilets are well lit with lighting overhead.

The flooring is non-slip laminate.

There are crosshead taps on the sinks.

### **Catering**

The tea rooms are situated on the ground floor and have step free level access from the main entrance and have steps or ramp to access the outside seating area.

The entrance doors to the tea rooms are 76cm (2ft 6) wide

Tables in the tea room are well spaced apart, with a clear height from the floor of 73cm (2ft 5) with a mixture of upright chairs with and without arms.

Lighting in all areas in natural daylight with overhead lighting used.

The flooring in the tea room is non-stick laminate flooring, and stone flagstones in the courtyard area.

Where possible, all our food produce is locally sourced. We do our best to cater for any dietary requirements; please contact us in advance to check any specific requests you may have.

The tea room is table service.

Specials of the day are shown on a blackboard. All staff can assist by running through menus with you.

The nearest public toilet with an accessible WC is located near the main entrance, approximately 21metres from the tea room.

### **Shop**

The Abbey shop sells a wide range of books, gifts, devotional items and monastic produce. The shop can be accessed directly from the main entrance area.

There is a one entrance to the shop through double glass doors. It is 160cm (5ft 3) wide and manual, they are usually kept open.

The shop is level throughout.

A low level desk and counter are provided.

There is ample room within the shop for a large wheelchair to manoeuvre and turn.

There are tall display racks and low tables accessible from a seated position.

There is background music playing.

Staff can offer assistance if required.

### **Grounds and Orchard**

The grounds are set within a valley, with a tarmac road throughout.

Some surfaces may be uneven and could be a challenge for the severely disabled and very elderly.

Main pathways are 396cm (13ft) wide.

There are wooden benches at intervals throughout the grounds.

### **Additional Information**

All of our staff receive regular training that includes disability awareness training.

We have a set of evacuation procedures – should you require it someone will assist you with evacuation either out of the building or to a refuge.

A water bowl is available at the tea room courtyard and at the Visitor Centre for assistance dogs.

Clear signage is used throughout the Abbey grounds using Galliard true type font large letters white on a green background.

There is an area to charge a mobility scooter and battery powered wheelchair. Please ask at reception.

### **Contact Information**

Address: Ampleforth Abbey, York, YO62 4EN

Telephone: 01439 766000

Email: [reception@ampleforth.org.uk](mailto:reception@ampleforth.org.uk)

Grid Reference: SE 59973 78153