

CARISBROOKE CASTLE, ISLE OF WIGHT

Hazard information sheet for educational groups

It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to complete a risk assessment prior to any site visit being made. This is a requirement of most local education authorities. The following information is intended as a preparatory tool and does not replace a teacher's or group leader's own risk assessment. Please be aware that conditions at historic sites may change rapidly, and that you will need to remain alert at all times during your visit.

All the trees on our sites are inspected annually. However, storm damage can sometimes affect the stability of apparently healthy trees and branches. Group leaders should be particularly aware of this when undertaking their own risk assessments prior to a visit.

The car park is situated at the end of an approach road that can be very busy.

- There is a traffic light system in use owing to a blind corner.
- Visitors are required to cross the car park to reach the site entrance.
- The site is surrounded by a steep sided dry moat, with warning signs in place.

The inner areas of the site can only be accessed through the ticket shop

- There is a chain preventing access by any other means.
- There are often vehicles moving around the site and the pedestrian entrance is also the vehicular entrance.

The ruinous nature of the castle presents many climbing hazards.

- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- Floor surfaces are uneven throughout and where exposed to the elements can be wet and slippery.
- Sensible footwear and outdoor clothing are necessary.

To the right of the Gatehouse is St Nicholas' Chapel which is still in occasional use.

- The steps down into it are old and worn.
- The floor is tiled and may be slippery.

Behind the chapel is the Princess Beatrice's Garden, which is surrounded by steep grass banks.

- The banks and the stone steps should not be climbed under any circumstances.
- There are steps leading down to a magazine. These are steep and may be slippery. There is a wooden handrail.

Visitors are able to watch a demonstration of the castle's donkeys on the tread wheel in the Well House and can view an exhibition situated in the stable block.

- As with all animals there may be a risk of zoonotic infection.
- Visitors should be aware that animals may kick or bite.

The 71 steps leading to the Norman shell keep are very steep and uneven.

- There is a metal handrail on the right and grab rail on the left.
- The castle's high situation means that the upper levels of the Keep are exposed and can be windy.
- The castle's outer walls vary greatly in height and in some parts are very low.
- There is a sheer drop from the upper levels.

- A metal guard rail runs around the inside of most of the wall walk.
- There is no set visitor route, and congestion can sometimes occur in confined areas such as the battlement walk, so extra care should be taken.

When in the castle museum, 'do not touch' signs should be observed.

- The wooden staircase leading to the second floor is old and wide; visitors are likely to encounter others descending the stairs.
- There is an emergency exit via a winding staircase from the upper floor of the museum.

The gatehouse ranges over several floor levels and lighting is dim. There is a narrow metal spiral staircase leading to an exit on the ground floor, into the gatehouse entrance used by vehicular traffic.

The majority of the visit will take place outdoors so appropriate clothing and footwear should be worn.

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