

**Founder:** Dr E.D.Svendsen MBE - **Chief Executive:** David Cook

A charity registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales Number: 264818

## **Access Statement for The Donkey Sanctuary**

### **Introduction**

The Donkey Sanctuary rescues unwanted and neglected donkeys. Around 400 of our residents live at Slade House Farm, Sidmouth, which is open to the public. We have a range of walks around the site with easy to follow walk guides. The walks around the main facilities are wheelchair and pushchair friendly. Other walks are a little more challenging.

### **Pre-Arrival**

- A clearly worded leaflet is available describing the main facilities, directions, opening times, public transport and cycle access. The leaflet includes our contact telephone number, fax, email and web address. The leaflet is widely distributed to tourist venues and Tourist Information Centres in the area.
- The information is repeated on our web site. Work is in progress to improve the accessibility of our web site.
- The Sanctuary is accessible by car - just 30 minutes from the M5 junction 30 on the A3052 between Sidford and Seaton; on leaving Sidford follow the brown tourist sign at the top of the hill.
- By bus: bus stops are located within easy walking distance for the following services: Axe Valley Mini Travel 899, Coastlinx 53/54 Jurassic Coast, Stagecoach 52a.
- By foot: South-west Coast Path, access via Weston Mouth.
- By bicycle: access via National Cycle Network Route 2.
- The nearest major town is Sidmouth, 3 miles distant; access to the Sanctuary is via foot, bicycle, car, bus or taxi. The nearest train station is at Honiton, 8 miles distant; access to the Sanctuary is via taxi. Accessible taxis are available in neighbouring towns, including Sidmouth and Honiton.
- Shop-mobility scooters, wheelchairs and other equipment are available for hire from Sidmouth and Honiton. A limited number of manual wheelchairs is available from the Visitors' Centre at the Sanctuary.
- RADAR toilets are available in a number of nearby towns, including Sidmouth, Honiton and Branscombe. Keys are available from local Tourist Information Centres.

### **Arrival & Car Parking Facilities**

- Admission to the Sanctuary and car parking are free.
- The main car park has facilities for approx. 80 cars parking on stone chippings, plus 9 designated disabled spaces on tarmac. An overflow grass car park is used at the peak of the season, special events etc, and has spaces for a further 600 or so cars. The main car park has limited lighting; the attraction closes at dusk.

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- The main car park is situated within the heart of the Sanctuary with easy access to the Visitors' Centre and main facilities. The overflow car park is located within approx. 200 metres of the main car park - access is along a grass pathway. Vehicles can be parked to allow rear access. Neither car park has a dropped kerb.
- Access to the main facilities is via even tarmac or concrete surfaces. All central walkways are wide with plenty of benches. Much of the main site is level; there is a slight incline to some areas.
- There are no speed bumps, traffic calming devices or vehicle barriers within the Sanctuary. A cattle grid is located across the main vehicle entrance.
- A large format sign is located at the entrance to the Sanctuary giving details of opening times and a contact telephone number.
- Dogs are welcome if kept on a lead. A dog bowl is available outside the Visitors' Centre. The Sanctuary was awarded 2nd place in the Dogs Trust "dog friendly attractions" scheme.
- All signage is large format, clear with text and pictorial images. Large directional maps are located at several places around the site.

### **Main Entrance & Reception**

- The Sanctuary is open from 9am until dusk, 365 days a year.
- There is one main vehicle entrance. Visitors on foot, cycle or bus can enter the site at various points; the most accessible entrance is the main vehicle entrance.
- Visitors are free to wander the grounds of the Sanctuary; many choose to go to the Visitors' Centre on arrival. The Visitors' Centre is open from 9am to 4pm daily, later during the peak season. Walk guides containing text and maps are available from the Visitors' Centre.
- The Visitors' Centre is easily accessible from the main car park; there are no steps to negotiate. It has wide, side-hinged doors for wheelchair access. Benches are situated outside the doors and wheelchairs can be requested from Visitors' Centre staff.
- All merchandise is clearly priced; many items are at a low level, assistance can be provided by staff. The Centre has good lighting, a level, easily negotiable surface with a separate entrance and exit; pens and paper are available from staff.

### **Public Areas - General (Internal)**

- Internal public areas include: Visitors' Centre (see above), restaurant, video room, donkey viewing area, riding centre for children with special needs.
- All internal public areas are located at ground level - there are no steps to negotiate. All have side-hinged doors. They are clearly sign-posted with large format signs. Lighting levels are good.
- In some areas, access is via wooden gates; some are fitted with specially-designed catches for ease of use.

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- Seating is available in the restaurant and video room. Numerous benches are located externally throughout the site.

### Public Areas – WC

- There are two WC blocks; one is located next to the main car park, the other is near the restaurant. Both blocks are easily accessible with a wheelchair. Each block has baby changing facilities, non-slip flooring and facilities for visitors with limited mobility.
- Doors are side-hinged, one block has a cubicle with an outward opening door. Each block has a cubicle with grab-rails.
- Hand-washing facilities are designed for ease of use by visitors with limited mobility, e.g. lever taps.

### Restaurant / Dining Room, Bar & Lounges, Take Away & Café

- The restaurant is centrally located on the site within easy access of the car park; there are no steps to negotiate. It has both indoor and outdoor seating.
- Outdoor wooden picnic benches allow wheelchair access.
- Internally there are wide aisles between tables, the furniture is moveable. The wooden flooring is easily negotiable. The tables and chairs are of a sturdy, pine construction. The restaurant is well-lit with clear signage and menus on each table.
- Food is ordered at the counter and brought to the table.
- There is a separate picnic area located away from the restaurant for visitors who have brought their own refreshments. The outside picnic area is located at the top of a grass slope and has wooden picnic benches.

### Laundry

- Not applicable

### Shop

- See Main Entrance and Reception above

### Treatment room/s

- Not applicable

### Leisure Facilities

- Not applicable

### Outdoor Facilities

- We have a range of walks around the site with easy to follow walk guides.
- The walks around the main facilities are wheelchair and pushchair friendly. There are tarmac, concrete and firm, grass surfaces. All central walkways are wide with plenty of benches. Much of the main site is level; there is a slight incline to some areas.

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- Other walks are a little more challenging, with steep inclines, steps and uneven surfaces, e.g. the Nature Trail and the walk to the sea.
- All signage is large format, clear with text and pictorial images. Large directional maps are located at several places around the site.
- In some areas, access is via wooden gates; some are fitted with specially-designed catches for ease of use. On the more challenging walks there are stiles and kissing gates.
- Lighting is limited to the main route and car park - the facility closes at dusk.

#### **Conference & Meeting Rooms, Banqueting, Clubs, Entertainment**

- Not applicable

#### **Bedrooms**

- Not applicable

#### **Bathroom, Shower-room & WC [Ensuite or Shared]**

- Not applicable

#### **Self-Catering Kitchen**

- Not applicable

#### **Caravans, Holiday Homes & Twin Units**

- Not applicable

#### **Touring Facilities (Holiday Parks)**

- Not applicable

#### **Boats - Narrow Boat, Cruiser & Hotel Boat**

- Not applicable

#### **Attractions (Displays, exhibits, rides etc.)**

- Not applicable

#### **Grounds and Gardens**

- Not applicable

#### **Additional Information**

- No smoking areas are clearly labelled. Fire points are clearly labelled.
- Dogs are welcome anywhere on the site (internal and external) if kept on a lead.

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- Staff at the Visitors' Centre are trained First Aiders.
- Wheelchairs can be borrowed from the Visitors' Centre.

### Contact Information

Address:	The Donkey Sanctuary, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 0NU	
Telephone:	01395 578222	
Fax:	01395 579266	
Email:	enquiries@thedonkeysanctuary.com	
Website:	<a href="http://www.thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk">http://www.thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk</a>	
Hours of operation:	9am to dusk	
Local equipment hire companies:	Sidmouth: 01395 519850 Honiton: 01404 46529	
Local public transport numbers:	Axe Valley Mini Travel:	01297 625959
	Coastlinx:	01305 783645
	Stagecoach:	01392 427711
Local accessible taxi numbers:	Mike's Taxis:	01395 513408
	Select Cars:	01395 512512
	Sid Valley Cars:	01395 577633

### Future Plans

- Staff at the Visitors' Centre are being trained in British sign language.
- Braille leaflets are currently in development.
- Web site access is under review.

**We welcome your feedback to help us continuously improve  
If you have any comments please get in touch  
01395 578222  
enquiries@thedonkeysanctuary.com**

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