



ACCESS GUIDE – GOLDEN HILL COUNTRY PARK

Address

Hill Lane, Freshwater, Isle of Wight

Postcode for Sat Nav: PO40 9SJ

What 3 Words for site entrance: //begins.space.summaries

How to get there:

By car

The site is signed from Hill Lane / Colwell Road, turn off to Golden Hill Park industrial estate then immediately right, following signs.

By public transport

School Green Road stop (Routes 7 and 12) then take footpath F18, leading to F15.

Monks Lane stop (Island Coaster and Needles Breezer) then follow footpath F15.

By foot and bike

Bridleway F15 runs north-south through the site, providing a connection with Freshwater Village (via

Longhalves) to the south and Norton Green to the north. Bridleway F70 circles through the site and Footpath F14 also passes through from Norton to Heathfield Road.

Nearest public toilets

There are no public toilets near this site. The nearest toilets are in Moa Place in central Freshwater.

Car and bike parking

There is a car park that will accommodate about 20 cars in unmarked bays. The car park has a loose earth surface, with some loose stones.

There are cycle racks in the car park.

Site entrance

The main site entrance is from Colwell Road. This is where the car park is.

There is a map and information board at the entrance to the site from the car park. A dog waste bin is provided in the car park.

There is a Information Pillar at the start of the bridleway to the right when facing the fort. The site information pillar has a QR code that links to an audible description creating a mind's eye view of the area to allow a visually impaired person to enter with confidence. The information pillar also has a QR code that links to a map and activities. There is also a site map on the Information Pillar.

There is a locked site gate. At the side of this there is a 1.5 metre entrance.

There is a secondary pedestrian entrance from Longhalves. There is a small map at this entrance. There is no gate here.

There are a number of other ungated pedestrian entrances around the site.

Getting around the site

This is a site on a hill with a gradient of about 1 in 12.

There are three signed routes around the park – The Viewpoint Walk, The Squirrel Walk and The Wildlife Walk

There is a circular route around the site which is suitable for all users including those with wheelchairs and mobility scooters. All interpretation boards are placed at a suitable height to be read from a sitting position and all but one board can be read from the path of loose chippings. This is signed the “Viewpoint Walk”.

Other paths within the site are of varying quality and most are grass or bare earth. The main tracks are level and mostly well-drained.

There are a number of benches throughout the site and a picnic area with several tables that can accommodate wheelchair users.

There is a bridge near the pond that is made of two planks and is less than 50 cm wide. The pond area is tricky for people with mobility difficulties.

As well as interpretation boards, which explain the natural and built heritage of the site, there are a number of information

pillars dotted around that highlight opportunities to stop and look or listen for something.

This is a site that changes significantly with the seasons.

What you can see

- The views are brilliant – for these take the Viewpoint Walk as you will be able to look in all directions,
- In spring, look out of glades of primroses, and slightly later cowslips,
- Orchids can be found throughout the park from spring to summer starting with good displays of early purple orchid in spring followed by southern marsh orchid, plus the occasional pyramidal and bee orchid
- Between June and early August you might find a white admiral butterfly,
- Within the woodland you can find at least three ponds that tend to be seasonal as they often dry up in the summer. Here you can see dragonflies and damselflies such as the broad-bodied chaser. Some years newts are present and it is likely frogs and toads are also using the ponds from time to time,
- The Squirrel Walk is the best place to see squirrels,
- Look out for the remains of First World War army buildings,

What you can hear

- Where the scrub is thick you can hear birds such as blackcap and white throat. These are generally shy birds so you normally have to be content to listen out for their singing or calls.
- Other frequently heard birds within the park are jay, green woodpecker, magpie, robin. Blue tit, long-tailed tit,

blackbird, song thrush, goldcrest, chaffinch, buzzard and sparrow hawk,

- You will hear lots of coo-ing from wood pigeons and collared doves as well as mewing from herring gulls above the Solent,

What you can smell

- In spring, smell the gorse, it's like vanilla,
- There is stinking iris, particularly in the pond area,
- In the woodland smell the honeysuckle – it's food for the white admiral caterpillar,

What you can touch

- Enjoy our maze,
- Some of the world war one remains have etched plaques which detail their original design,
- Help yourself to seasonal berries but leave some for the birds,
- There are engraved discs on the back of some of our posts and pillars, these reflect the wildlife around,
- We have a community orchard by the car park – please have some fruit if you are hungry,
- Look out for the cairn that commemorates the opening of the park in 1970

We look after Golden Hill Country Park for the benefit of the plants and animals that live here and for you as visitors...we hope you enjoy your visit.