



ACCESS GUIDE – PARKHURST HIDE

Address

The Hide is situated within Parkhurst Forest. The main access for Parkhurst Forest is from Forest Road.

Postcode for Sat Nav: The postcode for the main car park in the Forest is PO30 5LZ. Subject to forestry working, there is closer parking near Signal House for those with mobility difficulties. The postcode for Signal House is PO30 5LX

What 3 Words for main car park entrance:

/// occurs.pampered.artichoke

What 3 Words for Signal House parking:

/// skewing.afflict.bolsters

How to get there:

By Car

Access both parking options from the main forest entrance on Forest Road. Both the main car park and Signal House are signed. Please be aware the road to Signal House is occasionally closed for forest operations.

By Public transport

There is no easy access by public transport. The nearest bus stop is Forest Corner Stop (Route 7) and a 0.8 mile walk along road and forest tracks.

By Foot / Bike

Cycling is permitted on the gravel tracks throughout the forest, so you can cycle right to the entrance to the hide area. There is a suggested route from The Red Squirrel Trail (NCN 23) via Stag Lane. On foot you can access the hide via the forest tracks from any entrance to the forest.

Nearest Public toilets

There are no public toilets anywhere near this site. They are in the towns of Newport or Cowes.

Car and bike parking

The main forest car park has a hard surface but with loose stone and tree roots. It can be muddy in wet weather. The parking is informal and there are no spaces reserved for people with a blue badge.

Cycles can be ridden or walked to the hide and there are opportunities to attach bikes to trees.

Parking near Signal House is informal and trackside. There are no formal parking places and please avoid blocking the route of Forestry Commission lorries.

Paths to site entrance

The path from the main car park is uneven and often muddy. It is along a forested / wild path for 0.3 mile and then a wider track for a 0.1 mile. Over this distance there is an elevation of 68 feet.

There are no gates or stiles along this path, but it is not recommended for anyone with mobility difficulties.

From parking by Signal House there is a 0.1 mile path to the site entrance. There is a decline of 15 feet. The path is wide, however there is a locked gate. There are gaps both sides of the gate. The narrowest gap is 85 cm wide and the other is 1.5 metres wide.

The site entrance is relatively flat and there are no gates.

The site

There is a Information Pillar at the start of the path to the hide. 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.

This is a hide for watching birds and squirrels. The hide is designed with seating inside however for wheelchair users it is equally as effective to sit within the covered area and look up at the sky all around.

What you can see

- Squirrels will most likely be high up in the trees. Sit still and if possible visit early morning or late afternoon,
- There are usually robins around. They sometimes will bathe in water collected in the nutshell seats,
- Look for our carved squirrel at the site entrance and other carved sculptures further along the main forest path from which to access the hide,

- If you walk further along woodland paths, look out for wood ant nests – these are large and the ants do get angry if disturbed,
- There are some wonderful fungi along the woodland paths, and these are particularly good in Autumn. However, many are toxic so do not touch, and certainly do not ingest,
- Parkhurst has some special butterflies. Pearl-bordered Fritillaries are nationally important, and White Admirals are also to be found. At our hide you are more likely to see a Speckled Wood, but you will find a variety of butterflies bathing on the woodland paths on a sunny day,

What you can hear

- The sound of silence! Or at least lack of human noise. However, close your eyes and sit quietly and you will soon hear wildlife all around,
- You are actually most likely to find your squirrel through listening for it. They can be heard rustling in the tree-tops
- If you hear a pitter-patter and its not raining, it may be a squirrel munching pine cones – this is the noise the leftovers make as they hit the tree leaves around the hide,
- Listen for Long-tailed Tits, they are rather excitable and travel around in flocks,

What you can smell

- Stinking Iris – also known as roast beef plant,

What you can touch

- The different textures of the trees and their leaves. This is a mixed forest – hug a tree trunk and see if you can guess what it is,
- Some of the trees and shrubs are sharp – Holly and Butchers Broom can be found close by,
- There are a lot of ferns adjacent to the hide, these are so different. The fluffiness of Maidenhair Fern and the cool Hart's Tongue,
- Have a hunt for pines cones – particularly those that have been eaten by squirrels,

We look after Parkhurst Hide for the benefit of the plants and animals that live here and for you as visitors...we hope you enjoy your visit.