



# THE BIG CAT

## SANCTUARY



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## Accessibility Guide for The Big Cat Sanctuary

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## Welcome

The Big Cat Sanctuary is a registered animal charity whose aim is to contribute to global conservation. Set in the heart of the countryside at Smarden, Kent, the peace and tranquillity of the site provides excellent conditions for the successful breeding of the beautiful, yet endangered cats both large and small within the European Endangered Species Breeding Programme.

## At a Glance

### Level Access

- The main entrance has level access with a ramp. The ramp is permanent.
- There is level access from the main entrance to:
  - Heritage Lodge Main Restaurant
  - Heritage Lodge Cafe
  - Dining Table
  - Reception Desk
  - Heritage Lodge Toilets
  - BCS Shop
  - Founders Lodge
  - Heritage Lodge Smoking Area

### Visual

- Some parts of the venue have low lighting.

## **General**

- There is at least 1 public toilet for disabled visitors.

## **Getting here**

The Big Cat Sanctuary  
Headcorn Road  
Ashford  
TN27 8PJ

### **Travel by public transport**

- The Big Cat Sanctuary is not accessible by public transport - we are in the heart of the Kent countryside (the nearest train station is Headcorn, which is just under 2.5 miles away, but you would need to take a taxi from there)

### **Travel by taxi**

- You can get a taxi with MTC Taxis by calling 01622 890 003.
- You can get a taxi with Streamline by calling 01622 750 000.

### **We have a transfer service for visitors. Parking**

- We have a car park. There are accessible parking spaces. The parking is less than 50 meters from the main entrance. Parking is free.
- There is a drop-off point at the main entrance. The drop-off point has a dropped kerb.
- From the car park to the entrance, there is level access. There is a permanent ramp.
- The route is 1000mm wide, or more.

## **Arrival**

### **Path to main entrance**

- From the street to the main entrance, there is level access.
- There is a permanent ramp.
- The path is 1000mm wide, or more.
- The path is sloped.

### **Main entrance**

- The main entrance has level access.
- There is a permanent ramp.
- The door is 1600mm wide.
- The main door is side hung and manual.

## **Getting around inside**

### **Visual Impairment - General Information**

- Some parts of the venue have low lighting.



## **Ticket/ information desk**

### **Reception Desk**

- From the main entrance to the desk, there is level access. There is a permanent ramp. The route is 1000mm wide, or more.
- The desk has a low section.

### **Public toilet**

#### **Heritage Lodge Toilets**

- There is a public toilet for disabled visitors.
- From the main entrance to the public toilet, there is level access. The route is 1000mm wide, or more.
- The direction of transfer onto the toilet is to the left.
- There is 1500mm at the side of the toilet. There is 1500mm in front of the toilet. The toilets have handrails.



## **Shop**

### **BCS Shop**

- From the main entrance to the shop, there is level access. There is a permanent ramp. The route is 1000mm wide, or more. The door is 1800mm wide.
- The route through the shop is 800mm wide, or more.



## **Place to eat and drink**

### **Heritage Lodge Main Restaurant**

- From the main entrance to the dining area, there is level access. The route is 1000mm wide, or more. The door is 1000mm wide.
- To get to a table, there are no steps.
- If you need table service, staff can help you.
- The route through the dining area is 800mm wide, or more.
- There is background music.
- The table and plates have high colour contrast.
- We cater for vegetarian, gluten free (celiacs), lactose free (dairy free), nut free and vegan specific diets.



## **Place to eat and drink**

### **Heritage Lodge Cafe**

- From the main entrance to the dining area, there is level access. The route is 1000mm wide, or more. The door is 1000mm wide.
- To get to a table, there are no steps.
- If you need table service, staff can help you.
- The route through the dining area is 800mm wide, or more.

- There is background music sometimes.
- The table and plates have high colour contrast.
- We cater for vegetarian, gluten free (celiacs), lactose free (dairy free), nut free and vegan specific diets.

### Founders Lodge

- From the main entrance to this area, there is level access. There is a permanent ramp. The route is 1000mm wide, or more.
- The door is 1800mm wide.

## Getting around outside

### Designated Walking Trail

#### Big Cat Sanctuary Site Trail

- The trail is 1600metres long. The trail has a hard surface. The trail has seats.

### Smoking

#### Heritage Lodge Smoking Area

- From the main entrance to the smoking area, there is level access. The route is 1000mm wide, or more.
- The entrance is 2000mm wide.
- The smoking area has a shelter.

## Customer care support

### Accessibility equipment

- Unfortunately, due to the nature of our Sanctuary and the fact that our primary objective is a stress free environment for our cats, no dogs are allowed on site.
- We have an area to charge mobility scooters and battery powered wheelchairs.
- Would be possible in both Heritage Lodge and Founders Lodge

### Emergency evacuation procedures

- We do have emergency protocols, but as our site is all on one level and staff guide visitors in the event of an emergency, we have no specific procedures for disabled visitors - they are covered in our general emergency plans.
- We have other services for people with accessibility requirements.
- We will happily discuss any additional support needs or any adjustments that we could make to our experiences, overnight stays and other events. As our site is very open plan, with a majority of it being on one level or with ramp access, we hope we can accommodate all our potential guests and visitors, regardless of their needs.