

EXBURY GARDENS



& STEAM RAILWAY

SAFETY POLICY DOCUMENT FOR SCHOOL / GROUP OUTING ORGANISERS

Thank you for requesting details of the Exbury safety policy and for considering the Gardens for a future outing. Our aim is to provide a safe and pleasant environment that can be enjoyed by all.

The health and safety of our guests is of paramount importance, and separate risk assessments are undertaken covering all elements relating to a day visit. The principal measures from these assessments are highlighted below. If you would like to view any of the specific risk assessments this can be arranged by appointment by telephoning (023) 8089 1203, or via enquiries@exbury.co.uk. If you observe anything on your visit that concerns you, or feel we could do more to improve health and safety within the Gardens, do please speak to the Operations Manager, based at the main Gate Entrance, or write to us at the address shown overleaf.

GARDENS

A Health and Safety Committee meet regularly to review policy for the Gardens. The Gardens cover 200 acres and with over 20 miles of pathways there is much to explore. Consideration should be given by visitors as to their health and ability to walk long distances – other options to explore the Gardens by buggy tour or steam railway journey can be considered. A number of push wheelchairs are also available at the Gate Entrance.

STEAM RAILWAY

Children under the age of 8 years are not allowed to ride on the railway unless accompanied by an adult. One adult is required to accompany every x 8 children. A railway guard accompanies each train journey who is in charge of health and safety during the trip. Hands and legs must be kept within carriages at all times. The engine (locomotive) can get very hot and should not be approached. The railway has its own subsidiary health and safety committee who meet regularly.

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID FACILITIES

Exbury will always have staff on duty trained as “Appointed Persons” for First Aid help. There is a First Aid Building situated close to the main entrance with a rest facility. A further first aid box is situated in the mess room of the Exbury Engine Shed; the Rhododendron Shed (Gardeners Rest Room); and another at the main Exbury reception. All buggies carry essential first aid supplies. The nearest hospital to Exbury is Lymington, approximately 10 miles away. Staff will call for the emergency services if deemed necessary, or will advise you how to get there if required.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In cases requiring hospital attention, our first aid team will be in touch with the ambulance service. The Hampshire Air Ambulance is able to land at the Gardens.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

In the event of an emergency situation, the Gardens have a contingency plan that comes into operation. Members of staff have specific responsibilities that will enable the situation to be controlled or the Gardens evacuated in a safe and calm manner.

LOST CHILDREN / PARTY MEMBERS

In the event of a lost child / party member, please inform a member of staff who will then take the necessary action to resolve the situation as soon as possible.

DISABLED VISITORS

A full accessibility statement and map will shortly be available as a downloadable pdf from the Exbury website, or on arrival at the Gardens. Meantime, accessibility information is shown on the website under the visitor information section.

TRIPS, SLIPS AND FALLS

Exbury has several different path surfaces throughout the Gardens. The Main Drive connecting the entrance and the pathways to the Yard, Witcher's and Home Wood is tarmac. Radiating pathways from the Main Drive are a mixture of compacted gravel, grass verges and there are many areas of natural woodland. Most of the Gardens are level; there are slight gradients leading to the lower pond.

Because some pathways lead through natural woodlands, there will always be some risk of trips from tree roots and uneven ground surfaces, so we ask everyone to take due care. It is recommended that sturdy outdoor shoes are worn on your visit.

Wet weather can make some pathways slippery.

We do not allow climbing on the Rocks in the Rock Garden or on any of the trees throughout the Gardens. This is for visitor safety and also protection of the plant and tree collections.

ENTERING THE GARDENS

The Exbury coach parking / drop-off area is situated approx 100m from the main entrance. It has a level surface.

FIRE

Fire extinguishers are installed in buildings where necessary and are serviced by outside contractors. Fire wardens are present on site.

Regular electrical inspections are carried out on all wiring and equipment by outside contractors.

Fire exits in all buildings are clearly marked.

All fire procedures are managed in accordance with the Gardens fire risk assessment produced by a competent external contractor.

EXPOSURE TO WATER

The Gardens contain a number of water features, marked on the map given to all visitors. Flotation devices are situated at the Jubilee Pond and Top Pond.

The south-west corner of the Gardens offers a short walk along the tidal Beaulieu River.

ACTIVITIES AND GAMES

Exbury Gardens welcomes schools to participate in a number of supervised activities based on the school curriculum. Whilst some games are allowed these should only be under supervision in designated areas.

GARDENS MAINTENANCE

Vehicles: a wide range of vehicles are in use throughout the Gardens; all drivers are competent and trained in their use.

FLORA

The Gardens has a number of various landscaped areas; from formal landscapes to informal woodland areas and managed wildlife areas including Special Sites of Specific Interest (SSSI). Please do not pick or pull flowers. Please note that some plants within the Gardens can cause irritation and may be harmful to health if ingested.

FAUNA

Dogs on leads are welcome in the Gardens once they are well-behaved, kept on a lead and use the dog bins provided. Being part of the New Forest, the Gardens are home to a wide range of animals – whilst bites and stings are rare they can occur.

Exbury Gardens and Steam Railway, Exbury, Southampton, Hants SO45 1AZ

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