

## Access Statement for the Guildhall Museum, Rochester



This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with disabilities, but aims to accurately describe the facility and services that we offer to all our customers and visitors.

### Introduction

- Located at the Rochester Bridge end of Rochester High Street, next to Baggins Book Bazaar.
- The Guildhall Museum is a member of the Visitor Attraction and Quality Assurance Scheme.
- The museum buildings are listed Grade 1 and Grade 2 and they have complicated layouts with lots of stairs and changes in level.
- Whilst the museum does not have a lift, step free access is available at the entrance gallery where a touch screen facility gives visitors the opportunity to watch a number of short subtitled (English, French and Dutch language) displays highlighting key aspects of the museum and its displays. Step free access can also be made available on request to a member of staff to the ground floor of part two of the museum direct from the High Street.
- The entrance gallery and shop area are fitted with an audio induction loop.
- Baby changing facilities are available in both the male and female toilets. Disabled toilets are located a short distance off the High Street at North Gate.

### Pre- Arrival

Rochester is reasonably well served by public transport. The museum is approximately 5 minutes walk from Rochester railway station and about 1 mile from Strood railway station (Southeastern railway). The High Speed (HS1) rail link operates from Rochester and Strood to Stratford International and St Pancras International in London. Southeastern railway also run trains to London Victoria, London Charing Cross, Maidstone (via Strood), Gravesend, Canterbury, Dover Priory and Ramsgate.

There are good local bus links between Rochester and Chatham. Nearly all buses terminate at Chatham Waterfront Bus Station. Bus stops are situated on Corporation Street just a few minutes from the museum.

Rochester High Street is flat with part cobbles and block paved road and footpaths of paving slabs which can be uneven.

## **Car Parking and Arrival**

Whilst the Guildhall Museum does not have its own car park, parking is available in the many car parks that serve Rochester, all are pay and display with the closest parking available along the Esplanade, Corporation Street and Boley Hill. For full up to date details of Rochester car parks, please see the Medway Council parking information page <http://www.medway.gov.uk/information/findmynearest.aspx>

1. [Blue Boar Lane Car Park](#)

Blue Boar Lane Car Park, Blue Boar Lane, Rochester, Kent *ME1 1PD (Sat nav postcode)*

2. [Corporation Street Car Park](#)

Corporation Street Car Park, Corporation Street, Rochester, Kent *ME1 1NH (Sat nav postcode)*

3. [Cathedral Car Park](#)

Cathedral Car Park, Northgate, Rochester, Kent *ME1 1LX (Sat nav postcode)*

4. [Acorn Wharf Coach Park](#)

Acorn Wharf Coach Park, The Common, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1PW

5. [The Common Car Park](#)

The Common Car Park, The Common, Rochester, Kent *ME1 1PN (Sat nav postcode)*

6. [Kings Head Disabled Car Park](#)

Kings Head Disabled Car Park, Epaul Lane, Rochester, Kent *ME1 1SN (Sat nav postcode)*

7. [Boley Hill Car Park](#)

Boley Hill Car Park, Epaul Lane, Rochester, Kent *ME1 1SN (Sat nav postcode)*

Please note that Rochester High Street is a restricted parking zone and the road is closed to traffic on Saturdays.

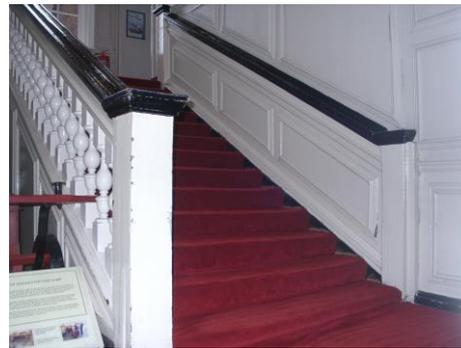
For coach parties, there is a dedicated set-down and pick-up facility for incoming tour groups to Medway on the A2 Corporation Street to the rear of the Visitor Information Centre and coach park at Acorn Wharf.

## **Main Entrance, Reception and Shop area**

Step free access to the ground floor entrance of the museum is directly off the High Street under the Guildhall Colonnade directly to the right of the Penfold Letterbox. There is an automatic glass sliding door (width 93cm/36 inches) to the left once you are inside the main entrance. There is an audio induction loop at reception. Puschairs and buggies can be left with the staff at reception.

The entrance gallery combines a small shop and low counter reception area together with River Medway themed displays and the touch screen museum information interactive display.

Entrance to the museum is free of charge to all.



Main museum entrance from the High Street    Stairs to the galleries and Main Court hall

## **Attraction (displays and exhibits)**

Highlights of the museum include:

- the River Medway themed introductory gallery, sales point and reception area
- the ornate 17th century Guildhall Chamber featured in Dickens's novel *Great Expectations*
- the incredible hulks – part of a reconstructed early 19th century Medway prison hulk on three levels
- the Medway Room with Medway tug virtual river tour
- the Seaton Tool Chest – the most complete example of an 18th century tool chest in the world
- displays of Medway's civic silver
- a temporary exhibitions gallery hosting topical exhibitions
- the Dickens Discovery Room and AV Theatre (a 10-minute film presentation about Dickens and Medway)
- a hands-on 'Discovery Zone'
- the 'Rochester Riverside Eye' – an interactive camera that gives live views of Rochester Riverside and Rochester's cultural quarter
- a Victorian drawing room and kitchen exhibits.

## **The Guildhall Museum**

Founded in 1897 the Guildhall is a lively, informative and colourful treasure house of Medway's history. It is housed in two adjacent historic listed buildings – Rochester's magnificent 17th century Guildhall (1687) and the former Medway Conservancy Board Building (1909). The cobbled Bull Lane separates the two buildings. The museum houses a wide range of fascinating objects highlighting the history of Medway from earliest prehistoric times until the 20th century.



The exit from the Guildhall to the Conservancy Board Building in part two is across a cobbled lane leading to steps up to the entrance with staircase to the first floor.

## **Public toilets**

The Guildhall museum has both male and female public toilets with baby changing facilities in each. They are located to the right through the door at the base of the grand staircase by the fire pump. There is a small step down to the corridor by the door and a further two steps down with hand rails to the landing near the entrances to the facilities.

Whilst the museum does not have designated disabled toilets, these are located a short distance away at Northgate by turning left from the museum entrance into the High Street and taking the left turning at Northgate cross roads. The toilets are located on the right and side of the road.

## **Additional Information**

Assistance dogs are welcome. No other dogs or pets are allowed into the museum.

The museum does not have a tea room or Café but there are numerous restaurants, pubs, cafes and coffee bars in Rochester High Street.

## **Contact Information**

Address: Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester, Kent. ME1 1PY.

Telephone: 01634 332680

Email: [guildhall.museum@medway.gov.uk](mailto:guildhall.museum@medway.gov.uk)

Website: [www.guildhallmuseumrochester.co.uk](http://www.guildhallmuseumrochester.co.uk)