

# CAWDOR CASTLE

ACCESSIBILITY

STATEMENT



## GOOD TO KNOW

- Backpacks and Rucksacks are not permitted within the Castle.
- Due to historical architecture certain areas can only be accessed by stairs.
- There is no seating available within the interior tour of the Castle.
- In our rural location there is very limited public transport.

**Visitors should consider access to the Castle according to their individual needs - this access statement is designed to give an overview of the visit to Cawdor Castle.**

# INTRODUCTION

---

## Living History

Cawdor Castle, dating back to the late 14th century, was built as a fortress for the Calder family. It is located in the village of Cawdor, 6 miles from Nairn and 12 miles from Inverness.

The Castle is a living home, with the Dowager Countess Cawdor residing there from Autumn to Spring.

The home features beautiful tapestries, antiques, and contemporary art, while the Castle grounds include 2 walled gardens, a wild garden, and a vast 750-acre Big Wood with nature trails spanning over 10 miles.



# GETTING HERE

## PRE-ARRIVAL



For full details on where and how to find us, please visit our website. You may purchase tickets before your arrival via the website and these can be redeemed at the Entrance Kiosk, tickets are also available to purchase on the day from 10am, to last admission at 5pm.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT



Public transport in the area is very limited and may change over summer months. The nearest train station is Nairn (5 miles) and Inverness (14 miles) and local taxi companies are available.

## PARKING



Parking is free for all visitors. There are 4 designated blue badge extra wide parking spaces in our Car Park. There is a dedicated Coach park and a drop-off and pick-up area in the lay-by near the Entrance Kiosk.





## Dogs

---

All dogs are welcome within the gardens and grounds of Cawdor, they must be kept on a short lead under close control at all times.

They are also permitted within the retail units and Courtyard Café.

Assistant dogs are welcome within the Castle Tour.

We have a dedicated Dog exercise and relief area located 100m South of the Car Park in our Games Field. This area is fenced off so our canine friends are welcome to be off lead in this area.

There is a dog waste bin provided and general waste bins in the car park, picnic area and throughout the grounds.

# WHEELCHAIRS, MOBILITY AIDS & PUSH CHAIRS, PRAMS & BUGGIES

## Castle

---

Due to historical architecture certain areas can only be accessed by stair.

There is no stair lift or elevator in the Castle and therefore there is no access to the upper floors to wheelchair users.

The access to ground floor rooms is limited due to narrow doorways and passageways.

Access to two of the lower floor rooms to wheelchair users is possible via a ramp. A member of staff will assist.

We can offer books containing large format text and images for those who do not enter the Castle. This is on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Mobility Scooters

---

Unfortunately, due to limited space and the nature of the building and conservation risk posed to flooring and doorways, mobility scooters are not permitted inside the Castle.

## Push Chairs & Prams

---

There is no access to push chairs, prams or buggies in the interior of the Castle.

Visitors will be directed to a safe storage area.

## Public Toilets

---

There are toilets located at the entrance beside the Entrance Kiosk as well as in the Courtyard Café.

There is one accessible toilet located beside the Courtyard Café in the South Courtyard of the Castle.

Staff will happily direct you to this if needed.

Baby change facilities are located in the ladies toilets and the accessible toilet beside the Courtyard Café.

## Rucksacks/Backpacks/Luggage

---

Please be aware **no backpacks or large bags are allowed** in the Castle.

Limited lockers are provided free of charge at the kiosk, these are available on a first-come first-served basis; therefore we strongly advise that backpacks are left securely in cars/coaches.

There is no allowance for backpacks/rucksacks to be worn on the front of individuals to enter the Castle; after carrying out a risk assessment it has been decided that this is an unsafe practice for visitors due to steep steps, spiral stairs, and uneven floors.

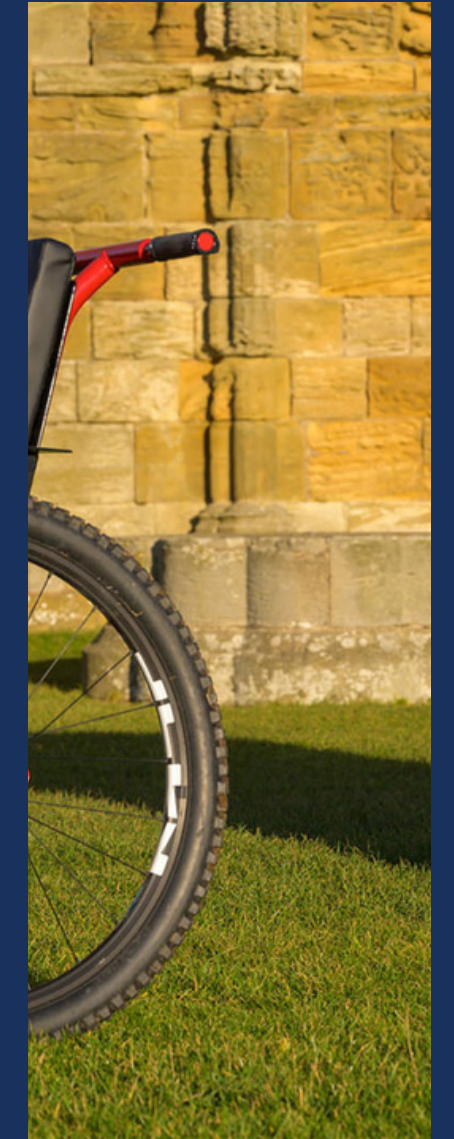
## THE PARATREKER™ TRAIL

An onsite Paratreker™ Trail – all terrain wheelchair specifically designed for navigating the gardens and woodland is available for free use.

This is on a first-come, first-served basis.

### KEY FEATURES

- 3-wheeled design using 2 x 27.5" x 2.3" all-terrain wheels and tyres at the rear and 1 pneumatic heavy-duty castoring wheel at the front
- Disc brakes with single lever operation for braking
- Aluminium 6063 T6 space frame design
- Stainless Steel Components.





## Admission

---

Our Entrance Kiosk is located approximately 100m from the car park. The approach is on a hard gravel path.

Visitors with a recognised disabled badge are entitled to bring an accompanying adult/carer free of charge.

Visitors will be charged at the appropriate individual rate for 'Castle & Gardens' or 'Gardens Only'.

Please note, carer tickets are only available on the day of visit with proof of registered disability.

## Audio Guide

---

Audio Guides are distributed from our Entrance Kiosk. These are available in 10 languages.

The device is for individual use, with no head set requirement; there is an aux input for use if preferred, please note we do not offer any headphones.

The tour starts when a number is pressed followed by the Green 'Play' button. The experience begins from the kiosk with No. 1 which provides instructions on how to use the device. No. 2 is a welcome from the Dowager Countess Cawdor. No. 3 is information on the exterior of the Castle and Drawbridge. No.4 – No. 14 contain details on the Castle interior and collections.

The numbers are consecutive and displayed on appropriately located signs, and the tour is designed to be enjoyed at your own pace.

- English
- French
- Spanish
- German
- Italian
- Japanese
- Chinese
- Russian
- Dutch
- Portuguese

# CAWDOR CASTLE FOOD

## THE COURTYARD CAFE

The Courtyard Café is in the South Courtyard of the Castle.

The café is 'Counter Service' and provides home-made soups, lunches, and baking.

We cater for all dietary requirements.

The service counter is 900mm tall and the passage is 1800mm wide.

The entrance is 1600mm wide and the exit door is 1200mm with a 3cm ramped threshold leading to the Courtyard.



## THE COFFEE HOUSE

Located near the drop off point.

Access is over an uneven gravel path with exposed tree roots leading to a 2cm threshold and a 1400mm door opening.

The Coffee house serves hot and cold beverages, sandwiches and paninis, snacks, and ice creams.

This is on a takeaway basis although there is limited seating, inside and out.

# CAWDOR CASTLE RETAIL

---



## Gift Shop

---

Located in the old stables in the basement floor of the Castle.

This vaulted room is accessed via stairs from the interior and a steep gravel path in the moat leading to an uneven 4 cm threshold and narrow 1000mm opening with low lighting.

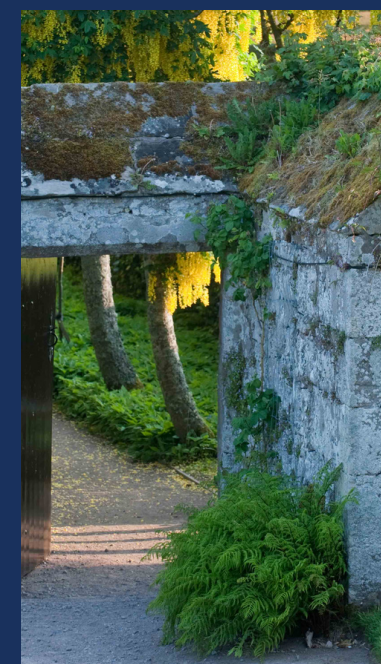


## Wool Shop

---

Located near the drop off point.

Door opening 1600mm with 2cm threshold approached on relatively uneven natural stone paving.



## Highland Shop

---

Located in the South Courtyard of the Castle which is accessed via a steep wooden ramp onto naturally worn historic flagstone paving with uneven joints.

A single step entrance with a portable steel ramp is provided where needed. Please ask a member of our team.

Door opening 1400mm.

# GARDENS & GROUNDS

## Gardens Overview

---

Due to the historical nature of the planting in the Cawdor Gardens some of the paths are narrow. The gardens team are continuously working to provide an inclusive environment for all our visitors eg. widening some of the historic paths in our 16th century walled garden to improve access.

Please ask our kiosk team for a map of the route suggested for wheelchair users.

Around the gardens the path surfaces are mostly level hard packed gravel from our local quarry or natural stone paving which can have uneven joints.

There is an elevation change of approx 4m between the Walled Garden and Flower Garden entrances, they are set approx. 70m apart on a compacted gavel pathway. The steepest sloped area is approx. 1:12

The wild garden is set on the steep bank of the Cawdor Burn descending approx. 8m below the Flower Garden.



## Flower Garden

---



A walled garden with ramped entrance, door width 1400mm

Compacted gravel paths & natural stone paving with relatively even joints.

5x bench seating areas

## Walled Garden

---



A walled garden with level threshold, door width 1400mm

Pathways are narrow with some pinch points, however, there are passing places with open spaces.

2x bench seating areas



## Front Lawn

---

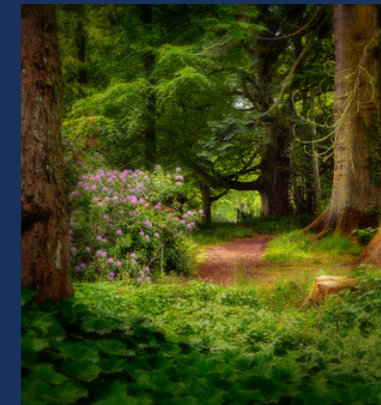
Compacted gravel path, level access to drawbridge and Flower Garden.

Slope of 50m approx. 1:12 to Walled Garden entrance.

3x bench seating areas.

## Wild Garden

---



Located on the steep bank of the Cawdor Burn access is via a wooden ramp through a door width 1200mm on the west wall of the Flower Garden.

Uneven woodland trail with well worn terraced natural stone stairs.

# CASTLE OVERVIEW

## CASTLE COURTYARDS

A 70m walk on a hard-packed gravel driveway from the Entrance Kiosk leads to the Castle drawbridge. The drawbridge is comprised of wooden boards spaced 5cm apart. Once across the drawbridge, the historic flagstones are uneven and naturally worn, care should be taken.

From here access to the South Courtyard is via an anti-slip treated wooden ramp to access the Courtyard Café, Highland Shop, Toilets & baby change facilities.

Eight uneven worn stone steps with a rail on the right-hand side of the stairs lead to the North Courtyard. This is the main front door to the Castle and the beginning of the interior Castle tour.

Visitors who require assistance with walking aids are welcome to take their aids inside the lower floors, we do not recommend any walkers are taken to the upper floor as they are required to be carried up two flights of stairs.



# CASTLE OVERVIEW



## CASTLE INTERIOR

The main entrance door has an opening 1500mm with a 4cm threshold step.

The floor covering throughout the interior is Campbell of Cawdor Tartan Carpet unless otherwise mentioned. There are stanchion posts and rope used throughout to delineate the visitor route – there is a one way system from entrance to exit.

Twenty-Seven steps with a left-hand banister lead to the first floor from the Drawing Room. The stairs are of stone and age-worn, there is a 4cm step at the threshold into the Tapestry bedroom and a very low doorway with stone lintel above. The opening is 1500mm in height and 800mm wide.

As you exit the Yellow Room towards the main landing there is an area of low light and a low doorway with stone lintel above, the opening is 1500mm in height and 900mm wide with age-worn flagstone flooring.

# CASTLE OVERVIEW

## CASTLE INTERIOR CONTINUED

There is a single 12cm step descending into the Woodcock room, in addition there is a low stone lintel above the doorway, the opening is 1500mm in height.

On exiting the guest bedrooms and Tartan Passage there is a single 12cm step onto the main stair landing. To enter the Tower there is a very small opening with a low stone lintel, the opening is 1600mm in height, 1200mm wide and three uneven carpeted steps lead into the medieval tower.

Descending the first floor of the Tower is a turnpike staircase of 8 stone steps which lead to a 5m long medieval staircase made of cut stone containing variations of surface with an unusual gait.

Visitors who are not able to descend the spiral stairs are advised to speak to our Visitor Services team who can assist down an alternative route.

There is a wooden ramp at the threshold of the Tree Room. Most of the tour offers good lighting, although the Tree Room is dimly lit so vision may be limited.





# CASTLE OVERVIEW

## CASTLE INTERIOR CONTINUED

Leaving the Tree Room you join the Main Stairs through an opening 1700mm wide. The Main Stairs are wide tread, low rise, well worn stone with a carpet covering. There are 14 steps with a banister on the right-hand side to ground level.

Entering the Modern Kitchen from the Dining Room is a narrow opening 1400mm wide.

Leaving the Modern Kitchen there is a door opening 1400mm wide leading to a 6m long ramp approx 1:12 which ends with a final set of steep steps which lead to the Old Kitchen. There is a railing all the way to the bottom of the steps, particular care should be taken here as there is little uniformity to these steps.

On exiting the Old Kitchen and Larder visitors will enter the Gift Shop and exit the building through a low 1600mm and narrow 1000mm opening to the Castle Moat. There is an uneven threshold and 4cm step onto the gravel path as you exit the building.



# CAWDOR BIG WOOD

---

The Cawdor Big Wood surrounds the Castle and offers many waymarked trails ranging from 3/4 a mile to 5 miles in length.

Please ask our kiosk staff for a copy of the Cawdor Big Wood waymarked trails map.

Entering the Big Wood from the Castle is through the blue bridge gate where there are 6 stone stairs and on the other side of the wooden bridge a further 4 stone stairs.

Although we maintain our nature trails to the best of our ability, this is a natural woodland and is used at your own risk.

We ask that visitors are careful in the Big Wood and be respectful of the nature and wildlife that live here.

Please do not drop litter, pick wildflowers or light fires.



## WOODLAND PLAY AREA

Our Woodland Play area is in a woodland setting, situated 50m to the South of the Wild Garden and is accessed through the Flower Garden.

A wooden ramp leads to the Wild Garden through a 1200mm door where a woodland trail follows the bank of the Cawdor Burn South to the Play area. There is a gravel path down to the play area which is surrounded by earth bunding and natural bark.

Appropriate footwear should be worn, and care taken on the uneven shaded paths.



We are here to help.

Please ask a member of staff if you require assistance.