

# Margate Caves Access Statement

1 Northdown Road  
Margate, Kent  
CT9 1HQ

E: [info@margatecaves.co.uk](mailto:info@margatecaves.co.uk)

## Introduction

1. Originally dug as a chalk mine in the 18th century, the Caves have been welcoming visitors since 1863 but were closed in 2004. Since 2011, campaigners determined to save the Caves have gained major funding from the Big Lottery Fund and Heritage Lottery Fund, boosted by lots of local fundraising including a Secret Postcard Auction and a Crowdfunder campaign. The building provides access to the restored Caves, and features a shop and community café. Here we tell the story of the Margate Caves and how landscape, ecology and geology have impacted on the town's rich social and cultural history.
2. There is no mobile phone reception in the Caves but phone calls can generally be made throughout the grounds.
3. Assistance dogs are welcome throughout the property and well behaved dogs are welcome in the café.

## Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. The property is not currently signposted. There is only Blue Badge parking at the property, the nearest car park is Trinity Square car park, if you park at the far end of the car park (away from the entrance/exit barriers) it is 300m from the Margate Caves, the postcode for the car park is CT9 1HR
2. Visitors can be dropped off outside the property but cars will need to be parked elsewhere.
3. At the front entrance there is a set of stairs or 2 ramps to get to the front of the building.

## WCs

1. There are 2 accessible toilets at the property, one in the corridor to the side of the café and one in the community rooms.
2. The accessible toilets are 2.25m x 1.54m. The main toilet is a right-hand transfer with a wall fixed bar, there is a second pull down bar to the left-hand side of the toilet. The toilet in the community rooms is a left-hand transfer with a wall fixed bar, there is a second pull down bar to the right-hand side of the toilet. The toilets have no natural light but otherwise are lit with a fluorescent uplighter. There is a pull cord alarm.

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3. There isn't a Changing Places facility at the property, the nearest Changing Places Facility is at [Thanet Gateway Plus](#), Cecil Street, Margate, Kent, CT9 1RE which is 640m away.
4. The main toilets are located in the corridor between the café and the community rooms, there are also baby changing facilities, a child's toilet seat and a step available.
5. All the WCs at the property have some kind of fluorescent lighting and automatic hand driers

### Entrance

1. The building is mainly made of hard materials with a solid floor, though there is carpet matting on entrance to the building. The space does echo with loud sounds.
2. The entrance is above street level though the external area to the rear is on the same level.
3. The entrance door is 1.02m wide and with a second door open, the entrance can be 2.04m wide. The door is power operated by button, though can also be manually opened. Staff can aid with opening the doors if assistance is required.
4. The reception desk is 0.76m high, but staff will come in front of the desk for those who may not find the height suitable.
5. There is lots of natural light in the building, though it is also lit by fluorescent uplighters and halogen spotlights.
6. There are multiple chairs available in the cafe, including an option with arms.
7. We do not currently have an induction loop.

### Retail

1. The retail area is in the corner of the building.
2. To get into the retail area it is level from the Reception area.
3. There are no soft furnishings within the shop and it has a hard floor, but due to stock and shelving etc there is limited echo
4. The shop has some natural lighting with fluorescent uplighters and halogen spotlights
5. There is circulation space of 1.2m between displays and shelving
6. Staff will happily reach down stock for those who may not be able to reach
7. There is no large print stock pricing but staff are available and happy to assist customers with any visual impairment.

### Catering

1. The café is in the same building as above.
2. The café has some natural lighting with fluorescent uplighters and halogen spotlights.
3. The counter height is 0.76m, staff will assist those who need it and serve items that cannot be reached when necessary.
4. All of the tables and chairs can be moved so that there is circulation space of 1.2m and the staff can assist with this when needed.

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5. We do not have braille or large print menus but staff will verbally give any information needed so do ask.
6. Straws are available on request.

### **Interpretation room**

1. The interpretation room is to the rear of the building, it has little natural light and is lit with LED downlighters.
2. The corridor into the interpretation room is 1.53m wide.
3. There is a low bench in the interpretation room.
4. Large print of all text is available in the interpretation room.

### **The Caves**

1. There are 33 stairs down into the caves, followed by a 15m tunnel with rough floor and low ceilings, the stairs are 1.1m wide and the tunnel varies but gets no narrower than 0.5m wide.
2. In the Caves the ceilings are generally high and there are steep slopes and drops protected by balustrades. The tunnel height to get into the base of the ice wells is 1.6m high and 0.6m wide
3. The stairs are lit with low level lights, the tunnel and caves are lit with ground level LED festoon lighting, light levels are generally low, for those who need more light, torches are available.
4. There is no access to the caves for non-ambulatory visitors, please do speak to a member of staff for images and description.

### **Contact details for more information**

E: [info@margatecaves.co.uk](mailto:info@margatecaves.co.uk)

**20<sup>th</sup> August 2019**