



## **ACCESS GUIDE – MERSTONE STATION**

### **Address**

Merstone Lane, Merstone, Isle of Wight

**Postcode for Sat Nav:** PO30 3DQ

**What 3 Words for site entrance:** `///orbited.sharpens.disband`

### **How to get there:**

#### **By car**

From Merstone Lane.

#### **By public transport**

Newlands Stop (Route 2) is right outside.

#### **By foot / bike**

The Red Squirrel Trail (path number NCN 23) goes right through the site. This is a shared path.

### **Nearest public toilets**

There are no toilets anywhere near this site. The nearest toilets are in the village of Arreton. The nearest public toilets are in Newport.

## **Car and bike parking**

There is a gravel car park on site, parking is free of charge. There are no marked bays and care should be taken if unloading wheelchairs. There are lockable cycle racks.

## **Site entrance**

The site gate is always open, it is wide enough for vehicles to enter.

There is a map at the entrance to the site from the car park. This gives details of walking and cycling routes that start from the station. There is also an interpretation panel near the car park, giving details of what can be seen, and a noticeboard. A dog waste bin is provided in the car park.

## **Getting around the site**

Merstone Station is dissected by the Red Squirrel Trail. This is a shared path which is very popular with cyclists and horses. The Red Squirrel Trail is tarmac as it passes through this site. There is a bollard past the car park to stop motor vehicles travelling beyond. There is a 1.6 metre gap either side.

The site is flat, except for the old platform.

To one side of the Red Squirrel Trail is the car park and a meadow with a few young fruit trees. This meadow is cut once annually.

To the other side of the Red Squirrel Trail is the old platform with a shelter, a meadow, orchard and picnic area, including a barbecue. There is also an Information Pillar at this point. The

site Information Pillar has a QR code that links to an audible description creating a mind's eye view of the area to allow a visually impaired person to enter with confidence. The information pillar also has a QR code that links to a map and activities. There is also a site map on the Information Pillar.

We manage all of this area as a wildflower meadow and cut grass paths for access. There is free access to the north end of the meadow from the shared path, but at the south (road) end there are posts with a gap of 95 cm between. The notice board and interpretation panel are at this point and the interpretation panel is viewable from a wheelchair.

The railway platform is 80 cm high. It can be accessed at either end via a slope. The slope is gentler at the south (road) end where it is 1 in 4. It is 1 in 3 at the north end. There is a shelter with interpretation on the platform.

There are three picnic benches and it is possible to site a wheelchair at their ends.

There is an unfenced ditch to the east of the site.

### **What you can see**

- Look out for the railway heritage – our interpretation tells the story,
- There are beautiful primroses in early spring, followed by cowslips,
- Have a look in the holes in the brickwork both sides of the platform - you may spot spiders, lizards or slow worms

- Have a look for Pyramidal Orchids in summer – they are the Island's county flower
- How many different types of butterflies can you spot?
- Read the poem,
- How many creatures are on the station sign and who has left the bags?

### **What you can hear**

- Listen to the wind rushing through the tall conifers – they were planted to shield waiting passengers from the worst of the weather,
- Lots of birds – robin, blue tit, sparrow, jay, dunnock, starling, wren, goldfinch, greenfinch and magpies are all commonly heard,
- You may hear birds like partridges on the surrounding farmland,
- If you hear ducks, they are probably in the drainage ditch,

### **What you can smell**

- Blossom on the fruit trees,

### **What you can touch**

- Touch the warm brickwork of the railway platform, we often find lizards basking on it.
- Help yourself to fruit from the orchard,
- Feel the engraved picnic benches, the messages on the cycle rack pillar and the platform sign.

**We look after Merstone Station for the benefit of the plants and animals that live here and for you as visitors...we hope you enjoy your visit.**

