



ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

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

Introduction

We welcome everyone to enjoy our heritage experience and strive to make your visit as pleasant and memorable as possible. Please note that by their nature, heritage stations and vintage carriages were built in less enlightened times where the access needs of people were not considered. We are part way through a programme of accessibility developments. At the present time there are still some access restrictions.

The train journey ~ a heritage steam experience

Opened in 1902, the Vale of Rheidol Railway is a narrow gauge steam railway. We operate passenger services between Aberystwyth and Devil's Bridge. The 12 miles trip takes 1 hour in each direction.

Parking and Arrival

Parking - Aberystwyth Station - SAT NAV Postcode: SY23 1PG

Aberystwyth Station is the headquarters of the railway. All trains start and finish their day here. There is a dedicated railway car park located off Park Avenue / Boulevard St Brieuc. There is no charge for parking.

Parking - Devil's Bridge Station – SAT NAV Postcode: SY23 3JL

Devil's Bridge Station is the terminus of the railway. There is a parking adjacent to the platform. There is a small charge for parking (payable at the Two Hoots Cafe)

Parking – Intermediate stations

There is no parking available at intermediate stations or request stops. Some of these are in remote locations and can only be accessed by footpaths.

Main Entrances, Booking Offices and Shops

Tickets can be purchased from the Booking Offices at Aberystwyth or Devil's Bridge on the day of travel. It is also possible to book tickets in advance via the railway website or by calling 01970 625819. The railway offers a discounted fare for carers. Carer tickets can only be purchased from the Booking Office.

Aberystwyth

There is ramped access into and out of Aberystwyth Booking Office & Gift Shop. The building doors are 880mm wide. A second door can be opened to give a 1.6m opening. Aberystwyth Booking Office is staffed daily during the operating season and opens at 0900 whenever trains are running. The counter level is 1150mm above floor level.

Devil's Bridge

Devil's Bridge Booking Office & Gift Shop is accessed through a 680mm wide door and is accessible for many smaller wheelchairs. It is staffed daily during the operating season. The counter level is approx 900mm above floor level.

Current Access restrictions – Devil's Bridge

At present, some wheelchairs may not be able to access the Booking Office. Railway staff will open a gate to allow wheelchair users to access to / from the platform.

Train Rides

The railway operates a fleet of historic railway carriages which were built for the line between 1923 and 1938. Many of the carriages are fully enclosed, whilst others are open.

Standard Carriages

To access the standard carriages, there is one step of 400mm between the platform and the carriage floor. Extra steps are available if required, please ask the Guard.

The carriage doors are 580mm wide and internal gangways are 420mm and 520mm wide. The train crew will assist passengers with limited mobility, if required. They are used to doing this. Grab handles are provided adjacent to the majority of carriage doors.

The carriage doors are fastened using a handle on the outside of the door. The Guard will secure all the doors prior to departure. Upon arrival at your destination, the Guard will unlock the doors and assist passengers alighting.

Wheelchair Accessible Carriages

As of February 2019, two carriages have been adapted to carry wheelchairs. These are currently the open sided “summer carriages” – two further enclosed carriages are being converted

The railway intends to run a wheelchair accessible “summer carriage” on every train.

The wheelchair accessible summer carriage has space for a maximum two wheelchairs or mobility scooters

- Wide doors are located at the Aberystwyth end of the carriage. The door width is 900mm
- The ramp has a maximum weight limit of 300 Kg.
- The railway treats wheelchair users and mobility scooter users equally. As space is limited, priority is given to those who have booked space in advance. Please telephone Aberystwyth Booking Office on 01970 625819.

Wheelchair Accessible Enclosed Carriages

Two additional wheelchair accessible carriages are due to enter service in the next two years, the first in 2020, the second in 2021. These will be fully enclosed carriages.



Standard enclosed carriage



Standard open carriage “summer car”



Key things to remember when negotiating the ramp are:

- Remove any bags or attachments that could affect your mobility aid's stability, rail staff can assist you to get any luggage safely on the train
- Inform staff if you have any concerns about using the ramp
- You should be aware of the combined weight of you and your mobility aid
- Control your speed so as not to collide with other passengers or obstacles
- Look out for other passengers, who are not always alert to the needs of wheelchair and scooter users
- Carefully line your mobility aid up at the bottom or top of the ramp, and proceed steadily and carefully in a straight line when on the ramp
- Do not rush your manoeuvre, even if others are waiting to board the train
- Do not attempt to turn until your mobility aid is clear of the top or bottom of the ramp
- Encourage companions to allow staff to carry out any assistance on the ramp
- Wheelchairs should board forwards and alight backwards. Scooter users should board and alight facing forwards.
- If the design of your wheelchair, or particular safety features, mean you feel it is safer to alight the train facing forwards then please explain this to the member of rail staff assisting you.

Toilet Facilities

Aberystwyth

Separate gents, ladies and a fully accessible toilet. The accessible toilet has lateral transfer space and grab rails. There is a baby nappy changing facility within both the accessible toilet and the ladies toilet.

Devil's Bridge

At present only gents and ladies toilets are available on the station site, however an accessible toilet is available a short distance from the station next to the Sarah Bunton Chocolate Shop. This is owned and managed by Ceredigion County Council. *Accessible toilets will be provided on the station in 2020.*

On Trains

There are no toilet facilities on board the trains.

Intermediate Stations and Halts

There are small stations at Llanbadarn, Glanyrafon, Capel Bangor, Nantyrone, Aberffrw, Rheidol Falls and Rhiwfron. There is a waiting shelter and raised platforms at all these stations with the exception of Llanbadarn and Glanyrafon which have ground level un-surfaced platforms and no buildings. There are no passenger facilities or toilets at any of these locations. Rheidol Falls and Rhiwfron Halts are inaccessible by road.

Llanbadarn and Glanyrafon Halts have ground level unsurfaced platforms and there are two steps of 400mm between the platform and the carriage.

All trains stop at Capel Bangor and Aberffrw stations, however if you wish to alight at an intermediate station you will need to inform the Guard prior to boarding. The Guard will arrange for the train to stop. If you wish to board the train at one of these locations, please give a clear hand signal to the Driver as the train approaches.

Catering

The Two Hoots tea room is open whenever trains are running. They serve a wide range of hot and cold drinks, sandwiches, paninis, jacket potatoes. Handheld menus are available and are clearly written. The team room is equipped with chairs which can be moved to accommodate wheel chair users. It is operated independently of the Vale of Rheidol Railway.

Facilities for visitors with hearing impairments

The Booking Offices at both Aberystwyth and Devil's Bridge both have portable induction loops at the counters. Hearing aid users should switch to "T Position". Booking Office staff are trained to assist hearing aid users and are also aware of the needs of visitors who are lip-reading.



At present none of the staff are trained in British Sign Language (BSL) however we do provide staff with prompt cards for providing First Aid to visitors who communicate using BSL as well as a range of other languages.

Facilities for partially sighted visitors

Our staff will be able to assist visitors and can provide verbal background information about the railway and its history.

Owing to the nature of a railway environment, there are drops from the edges of platforms onto the tracks. Partially sighted visitors are asked to take care when on or around our stations. The platform edge is picked out with a white line. Buildings are designed so as to provide a good contrast / definition between surfaces.

Assistance Dogs

We welcome all registered guide dogs, hearing dogs and medical alert dogs. Assistance Dogs can travel on trains free of charge and are welcome in Gift Shops and Cafes. If your dog requires a water bowl, please ask a member of staff who will be happy to provide one.

Other Useful Information

Mobile Phone Reception

Please note that some mobile phone networks may not work in the area. EE / Three have reasonable reception along the line.

Devil's Bridge Waterfalls

Devil's Bridge Waterfalls are operated as a separate attraction. For further information visit www.devilsbridgefalls.co.uk or call (01970) 890 233

Public transport

If you are travelling by public transport, Aberystwyth mainline railway station is a short distance from the Vale of Rheidol station. There are regular rail services to Shrewsbury and Birmingham (New Street or International.)

Aberystwyth is served by regular bus services from across Wales. The bus station is located next to the mainline railway station. There is a short walk from the mainline rail and bus stations to the Vale of Rheidol Booking Office.

Public transport timetable information is available from Traveline Cymru 0871 200 22 33 www.traveline-cymru.info Devil's Bridge is a rural location and is not served by public transport.

Our staff

We strive to provide the best possible service. Many of the staff have undertaken disability awareness training.

Contact Us

If you have any queries about travelling on the Vale of Rheidol Railway, please telephone or email the railway for information and we will be able to advise.

Telephone: 01970 625 819 **Email:** info@rheidolrailway.co.uk **Website:** www.rheidolrailway.co.uk