

Frequently asked questions

Pre-visit information

When are you reopening?

We are open! We'll be strictly limiting numbers each day to ensure guests can keep a safe distance so all guests including members, children and carers must book online* before they arrive. Tickets will be released four days ahead.

*Please take care when booking online, if you are unsure if your booking transaction has completed, do not press the back button or attempt a fresh booking as you may be charged twice. We recommend that you wait a few minutes and then check your email for the confirmation to avoid duplication of payment. If we are asked to cancel a duplicate booking it may take up to 4 weeks for this to be processed.

What safety measures are in place?

The health, safety and wellbeing of all our guests, staff and animals remains our top priority and we are committed to following the guidance provided by the government. We've implemented a number of changes at the zoo to ensure our 140-acre zoo is safe.

- We are strictly limiting the number of guests and members each day to ensure everyone has a safe and memorable day with us, while fully adhering to the government's physical distancing and safety guidelines. This means both members and non-members as well as children and carers need to book online before arrival, and we won't be selling tickets at gates.
- Payments at the zoo are by card only and we'd really appreciate you using contactless, now with £45 limit, wherever possible.
- We're asking you to stay together and away from other guests, keeping your children at hand holding range. It's important to keep moving around the enclosures so all guests can see the animals.
- There are new one-way routes on narrow paths, and you will be asked to keep left on wider walkways.
- There are plenty of additional hand sanitisation stations dotted around the zoo so please make use of them.
- Some indoor animal areas remain closed for the time being and there are no animal talks, touch tables, train services or face painting.
- Our indoor cafes are not open. Instead, we're offering takeaway food and drink from outdoor catering outlets and we've created extra picnic areas.
- You'll see us cleaning a lot more but please help us by avoiding touching fences, windows, signs and exhibits.
- We've opened two of our adventure play areas but please follow the safety advice. There is a limit of eight children in each play area and each child must be accompanied by an adult.
- We are carefully monitoring toilet facilities to control numbers and regular cleaning is taking place throughout the day.
- We've installed a lot of signage on safety measures around the zoo so please follow all floor distance markers and guidance.

How can I help Marwell at this difficult time?

We are asking all guests to donate and Gift Aid their tickets to support the zoo during this unprecedented time. You can also donate online, join us as a Marwell member, adopt an amazing animal or even start your own fundraising activity. Your generosity will ensure we can go the extra mile caring for our animals. Every penny adds up and so does our gratitude, so thank you for your loyal support – Marwell simply couldn't do what we do without you.

Can I still use cash at the zoo?

Payments are by card only and we'd really appreciate you using contactless, now with £45 limit, wherever you can.

Will I be told to park any differently?

You can still park at the zoo free of charge as normal but please park considerately. If the car park is staffed, please follow directions. Otherwise try to park next to an empty car or wait until your neighbour has moved on. When unloading, please do so as quickly as possible. Please respect physical distancing measures when leaving and returning to your car by following all queueing signs and distance floor markings.

Don't forget please leave your scooters in the car and pets at home! We call the police in every case where we find animals left in any vehicle.

Tickets

How do I book tickets for the zoo?

To ensure the zoo isn't too busy, we are strictly limiting numbers each day. We need you to let us know you're coming by **booking ALL guests online before you arrive, even members, all children and carers**. All guests including members must present their booking reference on arrival and members must show their valid membership cards for each member. We regret member discounts on additional tickets are temporarily suspended. **Booking dates are strictly non-transferrable on date. Once booked, tickets are strictly non-refundable.**

Tickets are released four days in advance. If a date is greyed out, it is full.

In line with the latest government guidance, we are asking guests to book no more than six people in a group, including children.

Do I have to book a ticket for children under three and carers?

Yes, under threes and one carer of a paying guest with accessibility needs will still be admitted free of charge but all guests need to book in advance.

How often are you releasing tickets? Can I book for a date in the future?

Tickets will be released four days ahead only.

I have a day ticket which expired while you were closed. Can I still visit?

Tickets which were purchased prior to 17 March 2020 will be automatically extended until 31 December 2020. There is no additional charge for this ticket upgrade, and you don't need to contact us to make this change.

I already have a ticket, what should I do?

If you already have a ticket, given the small number in circulation, you may present your ticket at our admissions gate without using our online booking system. However all other guests with you, including both members and non-members, must book their tickets in advance.

I have a friends and family ticket, can I visit?

Unfortunately, these tickets are not currently valid. We will update you when the situation changes.

Can I bring a group to the zoo?

In line with the latest government guidance, we are asking guests to book no more than **six people in a group, including children**. At this time we're unable to accept large group bookings.

What are your opening hours?

We open each morning at 9.30am for members only and 10am for all other guests. Opening time will be particularly busy so please come later to avoid queues. Our closing time is 5pm. Last entry is at 3.30pm, 90 minutes before closing time for non-members and at 4pm, 60 minutes before closing for our members.

Staying safe

Where do I find hand-washing facilities?

All our toilets have hand-washing facilities, you'll find some extra sinks outside the Tropical House exit (although the house itself is closed) and we have installed lots of extra hand-sanitising stations around the park so please make use of them.

Do your staff wear face coverings at the zoo, and will I have to wear one?

All our team have been offered an optional face covering to wear, however in line with government guidance, they are only required to wear PPE where it's a necessity for their role; for example our first aid team and for biosecurity measures adhered to by our keepers.

Based on current guidance, you won't be required to wear a face covering when you visit the zoo but please do so if you feel more comfortable.

Do you offer a first aid service?

Yes, we are providing first aid however for the safety of our guests and staff please try not to ask for assistance with very minor injuries such as wasp stings and light grazes. We strongly recommend bringing a small first aid kit to the zoo including insect bite cream and plasters. Our first aid team wear face visors and the necessary PPE in line with government guidelines and they maintain a safe distance where possible.

Our animals

Are your animal houses and walk through exhibits open?

In line with the latest Government guidelines on physical distancing, some of our indoor spaces including Tropical House and some of our walk-through exhibits are closed to guests for the time being. We're working hard to reopen these areas and will let you know when it is safe to do so.

If you particularly want to see a species that lives in one of our animal houses, where you have an interest or have adopted it, we strongly recommend that you delay your visit until these buildings are open again.

Have you prepared the animals for an influx of guests?

Yes, we have been gradually increasing numbers of people passing by the animals starting with members of staff and volunteers, then through limited numbers of guests. Animal welfare is a priority at Marwell Zoo, and they all have plenty of space and choice about where to spend their time including quiet locations both outdoors and indoors. Our animals are always closely monitored by our expert team, which includes keepers, vets, an animal behaviourist and nutritionist, who continually assess all aspects of animal husbandry, health and welfare.

Do you have any animal talks running?

Unfortunately, we cannot offer any animal talks which encourage gatherings of guests due to physical distancing regulations and all touch tables are also closed. However, please see our website, social media and download our Marwell Zoo app to learn more about our animals.

What should I expect from my visit to the zoo?

We encourage guests to imagine Marwell Zoo as a walking safari. With 140 acres of beautiful parkland to explore, you'll need to allow 4-5 hours for your visit. Stroll around with a patient and watchful eye. If animals are not immediately visible, they could be resting in their den or under a shady tree so make time to pop back later. It will be worth the wait.

Food and drink

Are there any changes to your cafes?

Our indoor cafés are closed however some of our outdoor catering outlets are open for takeaway light bites, drinks and ice creams.

Can we bring a picnic?

You're very welcome to bring your own refreshments to enjoy and we've created extra picnic areas.

Facilities

Are the trains running?

No, the land train and rail train services are currently suspended.

Are the toilet facilities open?

All our toilet facilities (apart from those within our cafes) are open. To help with physical distancing, we are allowing family groups into a toilet block one group at a time. Our team are carefully managing these areas, so do expect a long wait at peak times to use the facilities. Toilets are being cleaned stringently and regularly throughout the day for your safety. Guests with disabilities still have priority access to accessible facilities so please make yourself known to staff managing queues. Our changing places facility remains open for guests with a RADAR key.

Events

Is the summer event SUPERSIZED! still on?

Our summer brick adventure SUPERSIZED! is fully installed and now on display until 1 November 2020. Guests will be 'shrunk' through a 'minimising machine' on arrival before meeting toy brick models SUPERSIZED to eye-popping proportions including a three-metre tarantula and a towering red spitting cobra. Unfortunately, the SUPERSIZED Basecamp cannot open due to physical distancing guidelines. Please pick up a SUPERSIZED trail map on arrival – don't forget your pencil or buy one at one of our pop-up shops.

Are you still running experiences?

We are not currently selling any experiences. Our team are already liaising with those who have already booked.

Shop

Is your shop open and can I buy souvenirs?

We have pop-up shops open for all your visit essentials and limited souvenirs. We're closely monitoring government guidance and will open our main shop with safety measures in place as soon as we are able to.

Members

Why do members have to book?

We are always extremely grateful for the support we receive from our members and this is now more vital than ever. We are strictly limiting the number of guests and members each day to ensure everyone has a safe and memorable day with us, while fully adhering to the government's physical distancing and safety guidelines. To do this, you'll need to book in advance using our online booking system. You'll need a valid membership card to book a place for each member and you will need to present your booking reference number along with your valid membership card and/or your email confirmation of renewal or purchase for each person at admissions. There is, of course, no charge for the booking. You will only be able to book one transaction in one 24 hour period.

Thank you for your understanding and for your support – it's hugely appreciated.

Do I have to book a ticket for children under three and carers?

Yes, under threes and one carer of a paying guest with accessibility needs will still be admitted free of charge but ALL guests coming need to book in advance.

I'm having problems booking online. What should I do?

Please contact our membership team for assistance with your booking. Once booked, tickets are strictly non-refundable so please do not pay for a ticket if you have a valid membership card as we'll be unable to process a refund.

Can members visit the zoo any earlier than non-members?

We open each morning at 9.30am exclusively for members and 10am for all other guests. Opening time will be particularly busy so please come later to avoid queues.

We close at 5pm and last entry for members is at 4pm, 60 minutes before closing time.

Are there any changes I need to be aware of?

We know that some members like to explore the zoo anti-clockwise. Please note to enable temporarily revised daily animal welfare and care, the anti-clockwise route is currently closed until around 10.30am each morning.

We regret member discounts on additional tickets are temporarily suspended.

Our membership cabin is open however with physical distancing in place to protect staff and members, we are operating a one-in-one-out system so please expect queues to be longer, particularly at the beginning of the day. Feel free to stop by later.

Are you extending memberships at all due to your closure?

All annual memberships were temporarily suspended as of Monday 16 March 2020. Any lost time you had left will be added to your memberships. This will be done automatically, and they will scan at admissions - you do not need new membership cards to be printed.

Alternatively, if you would like to donate this “time” to the zoo, instead of an extension, we would be extremely grateful, and it will support the ongoing care of our animals. Please contact our membership team.

I bought a membership online before or during lockdown and have not yet had a chance to get our membership cards. What should I do?

If you have received a letter detailing your membership number, you can use that to book your visit and to present along with your booking reference number on your first visit. If you purchased a membership online, the membership team will be in touch with your membership number shortly (if they have not already). You'll need both your membership number and your online booking reference number at the front gate for access.

I'm a member and I can't book a ticket as they are all filled. What should I do?

We've significantly increased the number of slots for members compared with the numbers of member visits last year. We expect to experience a high demand for these places during the summer holidays but please be patient! Please be mindful of how often you revisit so all our members can enjoy the zoo.

I have lost or misplaced my membership card. What should I do?

Please contact the membership team to arrange a replacement. There is a charge of £2.50 per card and these will be posted to you.