

Frequently asked questions

Pre-visit information

When will the zoo reopen?

We're delighted to confirm we'll be reopening on Monday 12 April – we can't wait to welcome you back! Tickets are released four days ahead only.

To comply with the current Government regulations for zoos, all our indoor areas including animal houses and picnic huts are temporarily closed until the restrictions are lifted. Our catering outlets will be serving takeaway food only.

We're strictly limiting numbers each day to ensure guests can keep a safe distance so all guests including members, children and carers must book a timed entry slot online* before they arrive.

*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 four 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 and all legal requirements. 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 a timed entry slot online before arrival, and we won't be selling tickets at our gates.
- All our indoor areas including animal houses and our picnic huts will be temporarily closed while our catering outlets will serve takeaway only.
- Please remember we are an outdoor attraction and our indoor areas are currently closed so there is no shelter. Don't forget to check the forecast before you book and make sure you dress for the weather.
- Payments at the zoo are by card only and we'd really appreciate you using contactless (£45 limit) wherever possible.
- To comply with the law, please do not arrange to meet more than six people (including children of all ages) or two households – and remember to physically distance!
- We're asking you to stay together and away from other guests, keeping your children at hand holding distance. 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.
- Café Graze, the Coffee Shop and our outdoor catering outlets are open for takeaway only.
- You'll see us cleaning a lot more but please help us by avoiding touching fences, windows, signs, and exhibits.
- We've opened our adventure play areas (with the exception of Penguin playground) but please follow the safety advice.
- 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 (£45 limit) wherever you can.

The only exception to this is the Penny Press situated at Fur, feathers and scales which requires £1 and 1p. Please bring change with you if you would like to create a pressed penny as a souvenir of your day. Our outlets or shop will not be able to break down larger denominations to create change.

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?

We are strictly limiting numbers each day to ensure guests can keep a safe distance, so you'll need to book **ALL** guests online before you arrive, even **members, under threes and carers**. Please make sure you book the right time, date, number of guests and check the [weather](#) before you book as bookings are **strictly non-refundable and non-transferrable to another date**.

Please don't visit if you or anyone you've been in contact with has symptoms of Coronavirus.

Tickets are released four days ahead only. **If a date is greyed out, it is full.**

You will need to choose a session time for your visit, either 10am until 3pm or 12pm until 5pm to avoid overcrowding on entry and exit. Please do not arrive any earlier than your timeslot.

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.

Please note that due to the need for pre-booking and controlling guest numbers, we are not currently selling group or bulk tickets or individual gift tickets.

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

Tickets which were purchased prior to prior to 5 November 2020 will be automatically extended until 30 June 2021. There is no additional charge for this ticket upgrade. Please call us on 01962 777407 to pre-book your visit.

I already have a ticket, what should I do?

If you already have a ticket, please call us on 01962 777407 to pre-book your visit. All other guests with you, including both members and non-members, must book their tickets online.

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

Due to the limited capacity we are working to we are currently unable to accommodate these tickets. We will be reviewing this regularly as restrictions ease further and we can safely increase capacity in the zoo.

Can I bring a group to the zoo or meet friends and family there?

To comply with the law, please do not arrange to meet more than six people (including children of all ages) or two households – and remember to physically distance. At this time, we're unable to accept large group bookings.

I have a membership with another zoo can I use my membership to visit?

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Due to the limited capacity we are working to we are currently unable to accommodate reciprocal visits. We will be reviewing this regularly as restrictions ease further and we can safely increase our capacity in the zoo.

What are your opening hours?

We are open from 10am until 5pm however all guests will need to book a session time to avoid overcrowding at our admission gates. Please do not visit earlier than your session time. Last entry is 90 minutes before closing time and 60 minutes before closing time for our members.

Staying safe

Do I have to wear a face covering at the zoo?

Please wear a face covering at our admissions area, when you visit our Gift Shop, order food and drink, in toilet buildings and on our boardwalks around the zoo (with the exception of children under 11 and those with medical or other exemptions.)

Where do I find hand-washing facilities?

All our toilets have hand-washing facilities 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?

All staff and volunteers are required to wear face coverings (unless exempt) in indoor guest areas within the park. This includes animal houses, our Gift Shop, admissions gates, indoor catering outlets and toilets. However, staff working behind screens will not be required to wear a face covering. Some staff must 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.

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?

All our animal houses are temporarily closed until the restrictions are lifted.

Have you prepared the animals for an influx of guests?

Yes. Animal welfare is a priority at Marwell Zoo and 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. We kept a close eye on the behaviour of our animals following the two closures last year and there were no significant issues with the return of guests to the zoo. While it's possible that some of our animals may react to an influx of guests, we expect they will retreat to more private areas of their enclosures while they adjust to increased activity. All our animals have a choice about where to spend their time including quiet locations within their habitats.

Our zookeepers and other essential staff have been working on site throughout



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lockdown, so the animals are used to people passing by. We plan to gradually increase the numbers of people passing by the animals starting with members of staff and volunteers then through limited numbers of guests.

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 plenty of time 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?

Café Graze, the Coffee Shop and our outdoor catering outlets are operating a takeaway service only. Face coverings must be worn.

Eat and drink from Monday 12 April

- Café Graze – Open for takeaway only, serving hot meals and a wide variety of snacks and drinks, face coverings must be worn. Toilet facilities are closed. Open from 10am to 4:15pm
- The Coffee Shop – Open for takeaway, serving sweet and savoury snacks and hot & cold drinks, face coverings must be worn. Open from 10am to 4:15pm – Marwell Flask Filling point, due to COVID restrictions, we are unable to touch the flask, however we will need to see the flask to be able to serve a hot drink
- Bushtucker Bites – Open from 11am to 4pm, serving light lunches and a range of hot & cold drinks - Marwell Flask Filling point, we are unable to touch the flask, however we will need to see the flask to be able to serve a hot drink
- Okapi – Open from 10:30am to 4pm, serving ice creams and a range of hot & cold drinks - Marwell Flask Filling point, due to COVID restrictions, we are unable to touch the flask, however we will need to see the flask to be able to serve a hot drink

Open weekends and school holidays

- BBQ – Open from 10:30 to 3pm, serving premium burgers and sausages baps and a range of cold drinks
- Snow Leopards Ice Cream Parlour – Open from 11am to 4pm, serving scooped ice cream and range of hot and cold drinks
- Ice Cream Pod – Open from 10:30am to 3:30pm, serving scooped ice cream and range of cold drinks

Can we bring a picnic?

You're very welcome to bring your own refreshments to enjoy - we've created extra picnic areas but please be mindful we are an outdoor attraction and due to the current restrictions, our picnic huts are currently closed. Please dress appropriately for the

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 are open with exception of Café Graze. Please note you must wear a face covering inside the toilets.

Please use our toilets safely

- If it's busy, please wait for guests to leave before entering
- Follow the queuing system and one-way routes
- Keep doorways and paths clear
- Mind your distancing
- Clean your hands before and after using our toilets
- Toilets will be closed regularly for increased cleaning. This will take a few minutes so please be patient

Guests with disabilities still have priority access to accessible facilities and do not need to queue.

Our changing places facility is open for guests with a RADAR key.

Are your adventure playgrounds open?

With the exception of Penguins, our playgrounds are open with numbers restricted as follows:

Penguins - maximum of 4 children (currently closed)

Wild Explorers – maximum of 8 children

Fur, Feathers and Scales - maximum of 8 children

Gibbons - maximum of 4 children

Okapi - we are limiting numbers, please check the signage

Please read the guidance at our adventure playgrounds. The consumption of food or drink on play equipment or in the playground area is banned.

Shop

Is your shop open and can I buy souvenirs?

Our Gift Shop is open! Please wear a face covering, follow all signage and browse in your household group only! Every purchase you make in our Gift Shop supports Marwell Zoo and its conservation work around the world.

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 will need to choose a session time for your visit, either 10am until 3pm or 12pm until 5pm. Please do not arrive any earlier than your timeslot to avoid overcrowding on entry and exit.

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.

As a member, can I book same day tickets?

Our valued members can pre-book online to visit us the same afternoon. To thank our members for their unwavering support, we will be carefully monitoring ticket numbers at the zoo and releasing a limited number of places each day exclusively to our membership holders. **Tickets are available to book online at around 1pm each day valid for a same afternoon visit anytime from 2pm until 5pm, with last entry at 4pm.**

Please note these select tickets are strictly for members only. 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 for each person at admissions.

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 I bring a group to the zoo or meet friends and family there?

To comply with the law, please do not arrange to meet more than six people (including children of all ages) or two households – and remember to physically distance. At this time, we're unable to accept large group bookings.

What are your opening hours and when can I visit?

We are open from 10am until 5pm and last entry for members is at 4pm, 60 minutes before closing time.

You will need to choose a session time for your visit, either 10am until 3pm or 12pm until 5pm to avoid overcrowding on entry and exit. Please do not arrive any earlier than your timeslot.

How do I cancel my booking if I can't make it?

Bookings are non-transferable, so please only book if you intend to come. If you cannot visit due to unavoidable circumstances, please let us know by emailing membership@marwell.org.uk, so we can release the space. Thank you for your understanding and support – it's hugely appreciated.

Can members visit other zoos using their membership cards?

Due to the changing restrictions around travel, please check directly with each zoo **before your visit** to find out their policy.

Are there any changes I need to be aware of?

We regret member discounts on additional tickets are temporarily suspended. Please note that due to the need for pre-booking and controlling guest numbers, we are not currently selling group or bulk tickets or individual gift tickets.

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 your animal houses and walk through exhibits open?

All our animal houses are temporarily closed until restrictions are lifted.

Do I have to wear a face covering at the zoo?

Please wear a face covering at our admissions area, when you visit our Gift Shop, order food and drink, in toilet buildings and on our boardwalks around the zoo (with the exception of children under 11 and those with medical or other exemptions.)

Are you extending memberships at all due to your closure?

All annual memberships were temporarily suspended while the zoo was closed during the national lockdowns and any lost time has been added automatically and they will scan at admissions - you do not need new membership cards to be printed.

We are extending all memberships for the time we've been closed plus a little extra to thank you for your support. Four months will automatically be added to your current expiry date and there is no need to contact us to confirm this.

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 or email 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 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.