

Frequently asked questions

Pre-visit information

Is the zoo open?

We are open! 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 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 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 online before arrival, and we won't be selling tickets at gates.
- To comply with the law, please don't arrange to meet in groups of more than six people including children during your visit (unless from the same household or support bubble.)
- 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.
- Café Graze is open for takeaway food only. Some of our outdoor catering outlets are open for takeaway light bites, drinks and ice creams. We've created extra picnic areas too!
- 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 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, 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?

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 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 in advance. If a date is greyed out, it is full.

To comply with the law, please don't arrange to meet in groups of more than six people including children during your visit (unless from the same household or support bubble.)

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?

Yes. You can present your ticket at our admissions gate without using our online booking system.

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

To comply with the law, please don't arrange to meet in groups of more than six people including children during your visit (unless from the same household or support bubble.) 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?

We are now able to welcome reciprocal zoo visits and most zoos will also welcome our members, however please contact each zoo **before your visit** to find out their policy.

What are your opening hours?

Guests can visit anytime from 10am until 5pm however 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.

From 2 November we will close at 4pm with last entry for members at 3pm.

Staying safe

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

In line with government guidance, you must wear a face covering in all indoor spaces of the zoo including our Gift shop, Coffee Shop, Café Graze, toilets and animal houses (with the exception of children under 11 and those with medical or other exemptions.)

If you forget your mask when you visit, we do have a limited number available to purchase.

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 and we have installed lots of extra hand-sanitising stations around the park so please make use of them.

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

In line with government guidance, you must wear a face covering in all indoor spaces of the zoo including our Gift shop, Coffee Shop, Café Graze (unless you are at a table eating and drinking), toilets and animal houses (with the exception of children under 11 and those with medical or other exemptions.) If you forget your mask when you visit, we do have a limited number available to purchase.

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, gift shop, admissions gates, indoor catering outlets, indoor picnic areas and toilets. 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?

Our Penguin underwater viewing area remains closed due to the guidelines on physical distancing.

All other animal houses are open, some with limited opening hours.

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?

Café Graze and the Coffee shop are open for takeaway food and face coverings must be worn. Café Graze is open to eat in with a limited number of tables. A host will greet you on arrival and take your booking reference number and either allocate you a table or advise you of the waiting time. Tables cannot be pre-booked. Tables are not available for drinks only. 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 - 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 Café Graze are open.) We have installed additional toilet capacity at Penguins, Giraffes and Tigers. The toilets at Penguins will only be open at peak times and will be staffed. 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 the playgrounds open?

All playgrounds are open with numbers restricted as follows:

Penguins - maximum of 4 children

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

Events

Is the event SUPERSIZED! still on?

Our summer brick adventure SUPERSIZED! is fully installed and now on display until 1 November 2020. Guests are '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?

Our Gift Shop is open daily with safety measures in place. **Face coverings must be worn.**

We have pop-up shops open daily for all your visit essentials and limited souvenirs.

Our Gift Shop is particularly busy towards the end of the day and as we must limit the number of guests in the shop, please allow plenty of time to visit and purchase your souvenirs to avoid disappointment.

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.

As a member, can I book same day tickets?

Our valued members can now 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 and will be reviewed in September. 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 don't arrange to meet in groups of more than six people including children during your visit (unless from the same household or support bubble.) At this time we're unable to accept large group bookings.

What are your opening hours?

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From 2 November we will close at 4pm with last entry for members at 3pm.

Can members visit other zoo using their membership cards?

We can now welcome reciprocal zoo visits and most zoos will also welcome our members however 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 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 your animal houses and walk through exhibits open?

Life Among the Trees will be closed on certain days throughout September (16th, 17th, 23rd, 24th, 28th, 29th, 30th)

Our Penguin underwater viewing area remains closed due to the guidelines on physical distancing.

All of the other animal houses are open, some with limited opening hours.

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

In line with government guidance, you must wear a face covering in all indoor spaces of the zoo including our Gift shop, Coffee Shop, Café Graze, toilets and animal

houses (with the exception of children under 11 and those with medical or other exemptions.)

If you forget your mask when you visit, we do have a limited number available to purchase.

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.