



ACCESSIBILITY GUIDE



Information for visitors with access needs and their companions



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1 Welcome!

We want as many people as possible to enjoy their visit to Midland Railway – Butterley. As a historic heritage railway and largely outdoor site, accessibility varies across different areas, buildings, and historic carriages.

This Accessibility Guide provides information for visitors with mobility needs, wheelchair users, sensory and hidden disabilities, fatigue-related conditions, and anyone who may benefit from additional support when planning their visit.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your visit in advance, please contact us — our volunteer team will do their best to help.

email us: enquiries@midlandrailway-butterley.co.uk

2 About Midland Railway - Butterley

Midland Railway – Butterley is a historic heritage railway set within a largely outdoor site. The railway includes original buildings, platforms, workshops, museums, and historic rolling stock.

Due to the heritage nature of the site, some areas have uneven surfaces, steps, narrow doorways, or limited access. We aim to provide clear and honest information so visitors can plan their visit with confidence.

3 Planning Your Visit

We strongly recommend contacting us before your visit if you have any accessibility questions or specific requirements. This allows us to advise on the most suitable areas to access and how we can best support you on the day.

Contacting us in advance helps us provide the best possible experience.

Contact details:

- Email: enquiries@midlandrailway-butterley.co.uk
- Telephone: 01773 570140

4 Arriving At Butterley Station

Butterley is the main arrival point for visitors, where parking is located and where visitors board the train to Swanwick Junction.

Car parking is located next to the station. Surfaces are uneven in places — something we are working to improve. There are designated Blue Badge parking spaces.



The main entrance can be accessed via steps or a step free path with a gentle incline. On running days, volunteers are usually available to offer directions and assistance where possible.



5 Getting Around the Site

When you enter the station, you arrive in the Booking Hall, where our team at the counter can issue your tickets and can provide a printed site map.

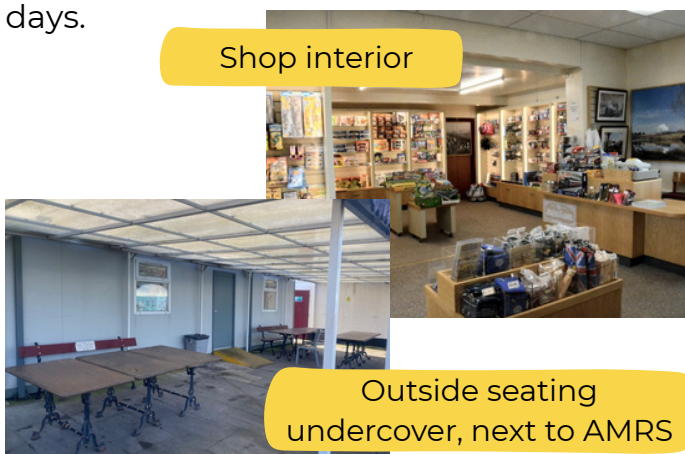
For wheelchair users, the ticket window is best approached with assistance from a carer due to the window height and the waist height partition, which is a heritage feature of the booking hall. Unfortunately this makes the space very tight for the wheelchair. If you would prefer to complete the transaction yourself, please alert a member of the team and we will assist you from within the ticket window office.



To the right, you'll find the station shop, offering a range of branded gifts, books and souvenirs. Continuing straight ahead takes you through to the platform.

Once on the platform, turning left leads to the Station Tea Room, which is open during some special events, including Santa Specials. This area includes covered seating and tables. Please check our website for amenities available on the day.

Located just beyond the tea room on the platform is the Model Railway, home to a large layout operated by the Alfreton Model Railway Society (AMRS). The 4mm (00 gauge) layout, known as Midland Road, is usually open at weekends and during seasonal peak days.



From the ticket office, turning right and following the short, flat route under the bridge (which is wide enough for wheelchair users) leads to the toilet facilities and the Garden Railway. Continue towards the Tugs exhibition carriage, then bear right and left into the former goods yard.

This area includes toilets and the Butterley Garden Railway, operated by the Butterley Garden Railway Association (BGRA). Live steam trains are usually in operation on Sundays, with both 32mm and 45mm gauge trains running.

The goods yard and garden railway area has a gravel surface, which can be uneven in places. It is generally suitable for wheelchair users, and, as with the main car park, we are working towards improving surfaces across the site. In addition there is a block paved path to the left.



6 Trains & Boarding

Not all historic train carriages are wheelchair accessible. Assistance with boarding may be available on certain carriages and services. Please contact us before your visit so we can advise and assist where possible.

Due to the heritage nature of our carriages, visitors who use wheelchairs may have to travel in the Guard's Van. Our staff will normally ensure that seating is provided for a companion, family member, or friend to travel with the disabled visitor.

- Platforms may have a step or gap between the platform and the train
- Assistance with boarding may be available with advance notice
- Seating is available on trains for visitors and companions

Boarding arrangements vary depending on the historic rolling stock in use. Please contact us prior to your visit so we can advise on the most suitable services.



Narrow gauge railway (GVL) wheelchair friendly carriage

We have all kinds of visitors with different needs! Here, Johnny 5 exits the Diesel Multi Unit via ramp

7 Getting Around Swanwick Junction

The Swanwick Junction complex is the main museum and visitor area of Midland Railway – Butterley, accessed by train from Butterley Station. It is a large, historic site with a mix of indoor and outdoor attractions spread across the former railway complex. Some events offer a bus service around the site.



The site includes a variety of surface types, including tarmac, gravel paths, paved areas and some uneven ground. Some routes involve slopes or changes in level, and distances between attractions may require a moderate amount of walking.



While some areas of Swanwick Junction are step-free, others include steps, narrow doorways or uneven thresholds, reflecting the historic nature of the buildings. As a result, not all historic buildings and attractions are wheelchair accessible.

Many areas of the site are outdoors and exposed to the weather, so visitors may wish to dress appropriately and allow extra time to move around at a comfortable pace.

On running days, volunteers are usually available and are happy to help with directions, advice, or to discuss the most suitable routes and areas to visit where possible. We encourage visitors with access needs to contact us in advance so we can provide tailored advice and help you plan your visit in the most comfortable way.

The examples below are intended to give a practical sense of what access looks like in different parts of Swanwick Junction, using a small selection of locations.



The Narrow Gauge Railway is located a short distance from Swanwick Junction station. The route is mostly level and reasonably flat, with a mixed surface that includes compacted stone and gravel, which can be slightly uneven in places.

The GVLR ticket office and platform are wheelchair accessible, and the railway operates wheelchair-friendly carriages, allowing visitors with access needs to enjoy the experience. Please check our website for opening days.

The Demonstration Signal Box is accessed via a short flight of wooden steps and is not wheelchair accessible. This reflects the historic nature of the structure and is included here to help visitors plan their visit.



St Saviour's Church is accessible, although the entrance doorway is narrow and access may feel tight for some visitors. Once inside, there is seating. Assistance may be helpful for visitors using mobility aids. Mobility scooters will struggle however, and best left outside.



On some special event days, a bus service operates around the Swanwick Junction complex, helping visitors travel between key areas of the site. This may include transport to locations such as the West Shed and the Miniature Railway.

Details of transport arrangements vary by event and will be shared in advance where possible. Visitors with access needs are welcome to contact us ahead of their visit to discuss the most suitable options.

8 Toilets

Disabled and baby change toilets are available on site. Locations may vary depending on the areas open on the day of your visit.

Please contact us in advance or ask a volunteer on arrival for the most up-to-date information.



Butterley Station toilets are accessed this way to the former goods yard.



Disabled and baby change toilets on the platform at Swanwick Junction.



Some small kerbs and brick paving

Male and female toilets as you walk out of Swanwick Station.



More toilets including disabled and baby change in the centre of Swanwick complex.

9 Hidden Disabilities and Sensory Conditions

We recognise that not all disabilities are visible.

Please be aware:

- Steam trains can produce loud noises, including whistles, engine sounds, and steam release
- As a working heritage railway, visitors can expect a variety of sights, sounds, and smells
- The site can be busy on running days, especially during special events

Visitors who may benefit from quieter periods are welcome to contact us in advance to discuss the best times to visit.



10 Seating, Rest Areas and Fatigue

Benches and seating are available at various points across the site and platforms. We are working to increase the availability of seating in some areas of the complex.

The train journey itself provides a seated experience, offering opportunities to rest during your visit.



11 Assistance Dogs & Pets

Registered assistance dogs are welcome throughout the site and on our trains. Water bowls can be provided on request.

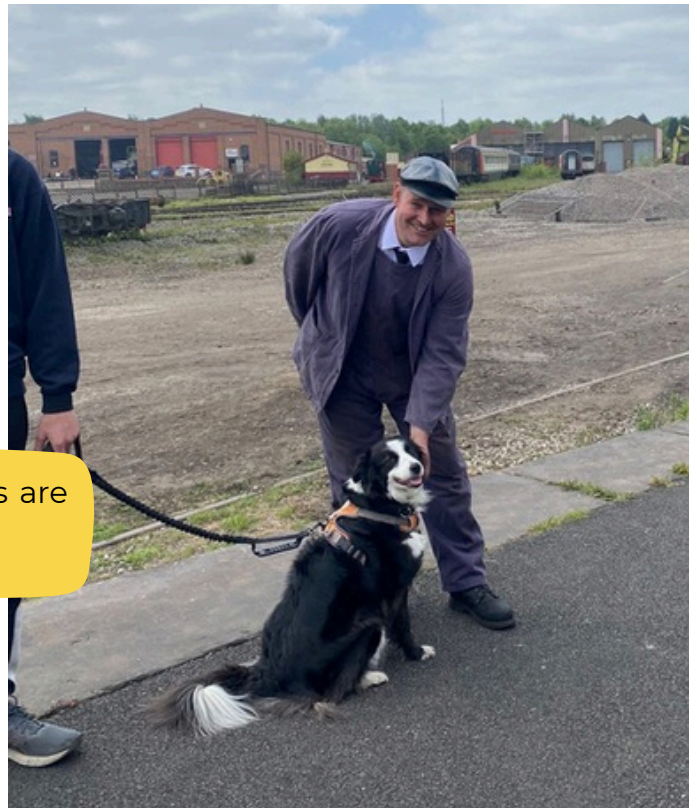
Well-behaved dogs on a lead are welcome and may travel on the train for a small additional fare.

*Dogs are not permitted in some indoor spaces or catering areas.

*On certain special event days such as Fireworks and Santa Specials, dogs may not be permitted (except assistance dogs). Please check event details before booking.



Both guide dogs and *well behaved dogs are welcome at Midland Railway - Butterley.



12 Hearing, Vision & Communication

Printed timetables and signage are available across the site.

Volunteers are happy to provide information verbally and help clarify details during your visit.

If you have specific communication needs, please contact us in advance where possible. If you require further assistance on the day, please call the Butterley Station office: 01773 570140.

13 Feedback & Continuous Improvement

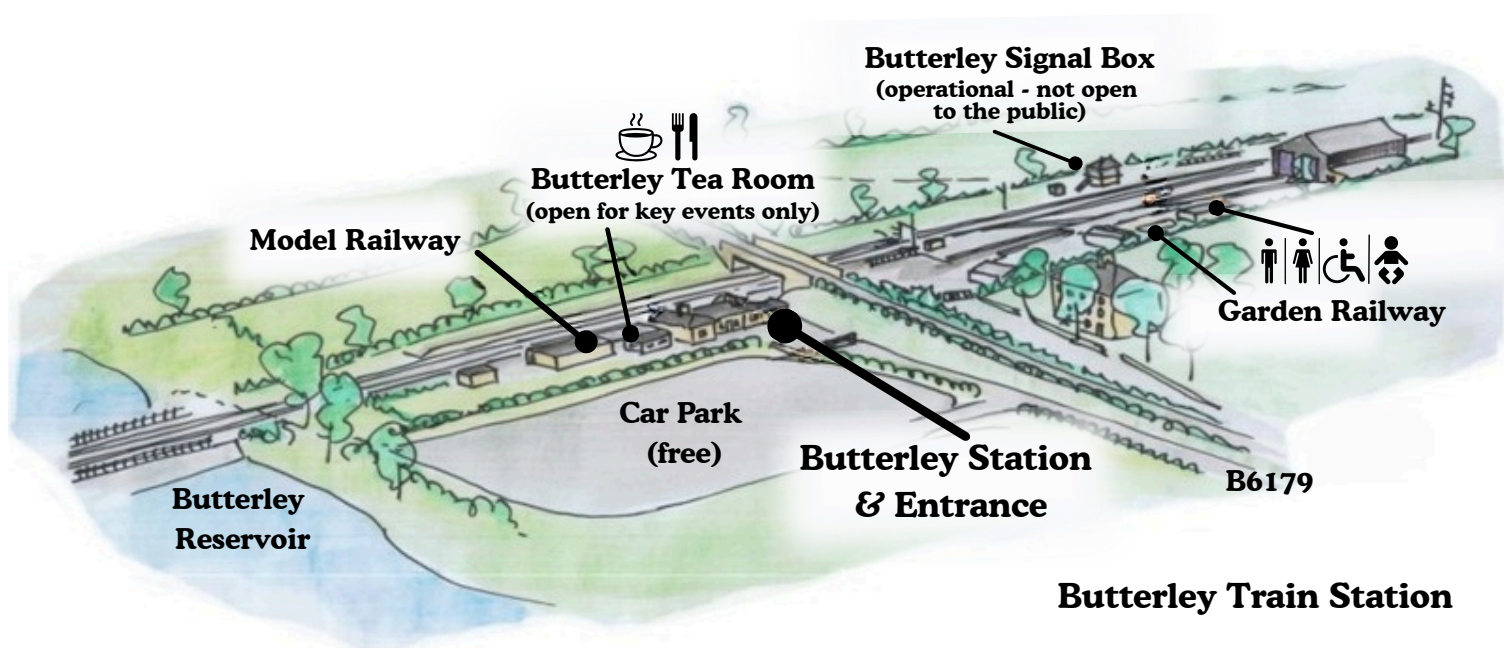
We are continually working to improve accessibility across Midland Railway – Butterley. We welcome feedback from visitors to help us identify areas for improvement and ensure this guide remains accurate and helpful.

14 Contact Information

If you have any questions about accessibility or would like to discuss your visit in advance, please contact us:

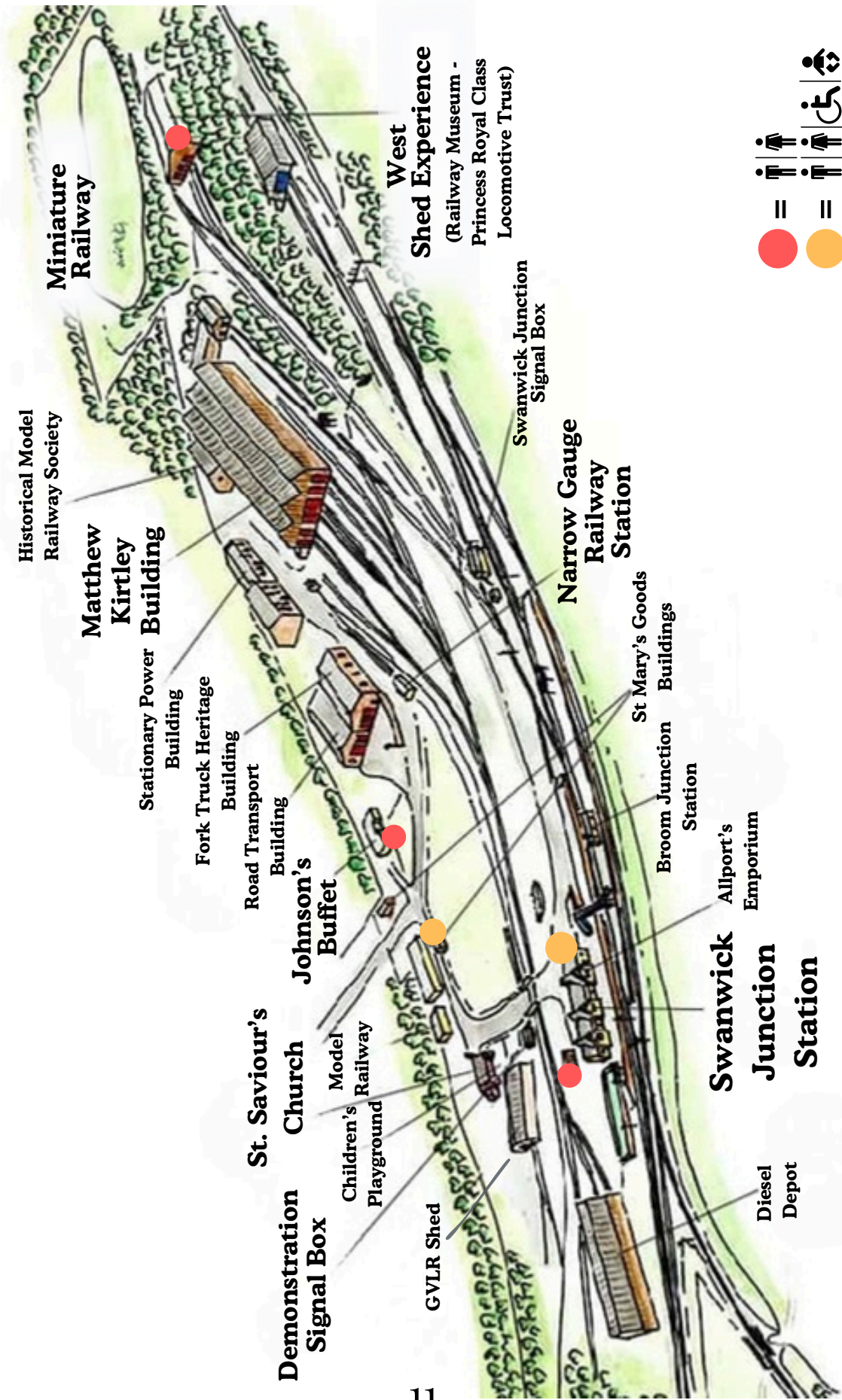
Email: enquiries@midlandrailway-butterley.co.uk

Telephone: 01773 570140



Find us here:

**Midland Railway Trust,
Butterley Train Station,
Ripley,
Derbyshire,
DE5 3QZ**



Historical Model
Railway Society

Miniature
Railway

Matthew
Kirtley
Building

Stationary Power
Building

Fork Truck Heritage
Building

Road Transport
Building

Johnson's
Buffet

St. Saviour's
Church

Children's
Railway
Playground

Demonstration
Signal Box

GVL R Shed

West
Shed Experience
(Railway Museum -
Princess Royal Class
Locomotive Trust)

Swanwick Junction
Signal Box

Narrow Gauge
Railway
Station



St Mary's Goods
Buildings

Broom Junction
Station

Allport's
Emporium

Swanwick
Junction
Station

Diesel
Depot

● = 
● = 

Swanwick Junction Complex