

Glen Helen Access Review

The Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) is presently responsible for our lovely Manx National Glens and is keen to make them more accessible. Improvement works are in progress though some glens will never be fully accessible due to their terrain. As part of that initiative, access information has been included in this book. We hope this will help you decide which glen may be suitable for you. Note that everyone's needs are unique according to their limitations and also the equipment at their disposal and any information given is merely a rough guide. However we hope the access information contained will encourage residents and tourists alike to venture out and enjoy these beautiful spaces.

Team work has given us the information included. Shirley Huyton and Beth Martin, volunteers from Disability Networks, reviewed the more accessible glens with a wheelchair. Husband and wife team Ian and Kerry Sharp (MLC) have kindly done on-site research for access including information for the visually impaired in the remainder of the glens. Author Susan Jellis and husband Graham also walked the glens with access in mind for the book. Access icons are included in the book but more detailed information is available online at www.disabilitynetworks.info, giving further insight for suitability.

Remember that this feedback related to one visit one day and circumstances can change, such as path slippage or path improvements by DEFA, cafes opening and closing etc. Our reviewers have tried to take into consideration all of the concerns and questions you may have but a quick call ahead to check on current conditions for any facilities is always a good idea. Many cafes are seasonal. If there is no cafe onsite, we have suggested the nearest facility.

Some glens have only one path but others have options. Our reviewers have tried to give you some idea of walking distance but it is only an approximate figure. All the glens welcome dog walkers including assistance dogs. Seats are available in most of the glens. These can be basic but provide a perching point designed to rest your legs and lungs. Others are very comfortable. Many have a good view from them. We hope that you are inspired to get out and start exploring our glens.

Access Information for the Manx National Glens

- Car parking – Yes, plenty
- Accessible parking – No
- Assisted wheelchair access – Yes
- Non-assisted wheelchair access – Yes
- Facilities for the mobility impaired (walking stick, frame) – Yes
- Rest seats for the mobility impaired – Yes, plenty
- Toilets – Yes
- Accessible toilets – Yes
- Assistance dogs allowed – Yes
- Cafe/refreshments on site – Yes, seasonal
- Inclines and comments – The left side of the Glen, out to the waterfall has a good, accessible footpath. It is a wide path, no overhanging trees, just a few tree roots. The wooden platform area at the end, by the waterfall, has been especially designed to be fully accessible and has a wide 'turning circle' for wheelchairs. A reasonable level of fitness is required for the assistant pushing a wheelchair if you are to reach the waterfall (or a second assistant). On crossing the bridge near the waterfall, the path steeply ascends to the top of the Glen. This path is not suitable for wheelchairs. There are steps and some boardwalks. The top path is wide and flat. There are a few exposed tree roots. The path then descends quite steeply down a narrow

road, back to the main road and car park. Fine for adventurous partially sighted/blind with guide.

- The cafe has a ramp for access and a WC for the disabled. It also has tables and benches outside. There are glamping pods to hire at the bottom of the glen.
- Distance – approx two miles return to the waterfall.