

Frequently asked questions

Pre-visit information

When are you reopening? We'll let you know as soon as we have an opening date. We're looking forward to welcoming guests back very soon, however our priority continues to be the safety of our guests, staff and animals. We are busy making the necessary changes including bringing back and safety training our furloughed staff and installing all the physical measures to ensure guests can safely enjoy our 140-acre zoo. As soon as the preparations are complete, we will reopen.

What safety measures will be 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'll be 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 will 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 will be new one-way routes on narrow paths while you'll be asked to keep left on wider walkways.
- You'll see plenty of additional hand sanitisation stations dotted around the zoo so please make use of them.
- All indoor animal areas will remain closed for the time being and there will be no animal talks, touch tables, train services or face painting.
- Our indoor cafes will not be open. Instead, we'll be 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. Our adventure playgrounds are currently closed.
- We'll be carefully monitoring toilet facilities to control numbers and regular cleaning will take place.
- 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'll still be able to 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'll be strictly limiting numbers each day. We'll need you to let us know you're coming by booking ALL guests online before you arrive, even if you are a member or bringing babies or toddlers. 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. We'll be sure to update you via our website and social media channels as soon as we open our booking system.

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

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

Tickets will be released four days ahead only.

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

All tickets dated from 17 March 2020 onwards will automatically be extended until the 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 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 will be 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. We will close at 5pm.

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.

Will your staff be wearing face coverings at the zoo and will I have to wear one?

All our team are being offered an optional face covering to wear, however in line with government guidance, they will only be 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.

Will you still offer a first aid service?

Yes, we will continue to provide 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 would strongly recommend bringing a small first aid kit to the zoo including insect bite cream and plasters. Our first aid team will be wearing face visors and the necessary PPE in line with government guidelines and they will maintain a safe distance where possible.

Our animals

Will the animal houses and walk through exhibits be open?

In line with the latest Government guidelines on physical distancing, all our indoor spaces and some of our walk-through exhibits will remain closed to guests for the time being. We'll continue to monitor advice and let you know if that changes.

Will you prepare the animals for an influx of guests?

Yes, we will be gradually increasing numbers of people passing by the animals starting with members of staff and volunteers, then through the initially 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.

Will there still be animal talks?

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

Food and drink

Will there be any changes to your cafes?

Our indoor cafés remain closed however some of our outdoor catering outlets will be 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

Will the trains be running?

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

Will the toilet facilities be open?

All our toilet facilities (apart from those within our cafes) will be open. To help with physical distancing, we will allow family groups into a toilet block one group at a time. Our team will be carefully managing these areas, so do expect a long wait at peak times to use the facilities. Toilets will be cleaned stringently and regularly throughout the day for your safety. Guests with disabilities will 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 going ahead?

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, we will not be opening the SUPERSIZED Basecamp 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

Can I still visit your shop and buy souvenirs?

We'll 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'll be 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 and present your booking reference number and your valid membership card for each member at admissions. There is, of course, no charge for the booking. Thank you for your understanding and for your support – it's hugely appreciated.

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

We expect to prioritise member entry for the first few days of reopening and will update you as soon as we have more information.

We will be 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 will close at 5pm.

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 will be closed until around 10.30am each morning.

We regret member discounts on additional tickets are temporarily suspended.

Our membership cabin will be open however with physical distancing in place to protect staff and members, we will only be opening one station so please expect queues to be longer.

Will you extend memberships at all due to your closure?

All annual memberships were temporarily suspended as of Monday 16 March 2020. Once we reopen the zoo, 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