

Totnes Castle, Devon

Hazard Information for Education Visits

It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to complete a risk assessment prior to the site visit. The following information is intended as an aid and does not replace the group leader's own risk assessment. We recommend coming to the site on a free planning visit, to help you with your risk assessment. Please note: where possible, English Heritage staff at the site will be happy to assist you with your queries, but cannot check or sign any section of your risk assessment.

Environmental conditions at historic sites may change rapidly and you will need to remain alert at all times during your visit. Most accidents are the result of slips and trips so please make sure you wear appropriate footwear and dress sensibly for the site and weather. Please be aware that the site may close at short notice due to adverse weather. Where applicable, stonework and trees at our sites are inspected regularly; however, extreme weather conditions can sometimes affect stonework and trees, so remain vigilant at all times. Please follow any staff instructions and be mindful of temporary barriers and signage. On-going conservation work may pose a temporary hazard; a member of staff will advise you of any works when you visit. Dogs on leashes may be present on site.

All learners who are 16 years or younger must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times whilst on site.

There are no parking or toilet facilities on site.

- Cars and coaches must park in one of the town car parks; there is a 5–15 minute walk to the site from the town car parks.
- The nearest toilets are located in the town market square.
- There are narrow pavements along the streets to the castle.

The historic nature of the castle presents many potential hazards.

- Climbing on the walls is not permitted and poses a significant hazard.
- The walls are rough and may contain sharp stones.
- The site is exposed to the elements with no indoor or sheltered areas.
- The keep staircases and walkways have limited space to pass.
- Access to the keep is restricted to groups of 20.

There are large areas of uneven surfaces.

- Ground surfaces are uneven throughout and can be slippery when wet.
- There are few defined paths on the property, and the site is mostly mown grass.
- There are remaining stone foundations.

There are steep banks and inclines on the site.

- There are very steep sides on the motte, which are unprotected.
- There are steep grass banks around the inner bailey.
- Climbing the sides of the motte and moat is not permitted and poses a significant hazard.

There are a number of steps and staircases on the site.

- The steps up the motte to the keep are steep and uneven.
- There are two narrow, stone staircases in the keep, leading to the wall walk.
- Stone steps around the site are worn and uneven.
- Single steps may pose a trip hazard.

There are high walls and sheer drops around the site.

- There is a sheer drop from the wall walk at the top of the keep.

There are some areas with low headroom.

- There are low doorways and limited headroom in the keep staircases.