

DUNBAR BATTERY

A Guide to Access



Written by Access Alba, on behalf of the Dunbar Harbour Trust
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History of the Battery

The Battery, completed in 1781, was built on Lamer Island to protect the Old Harbour & the town of Dunbar from privateers and invaders. Sometime later, c.1870, a two-storey hospital was built within the walls. In 1910, Dunbar Red Cross took over the hospital. The hospital was closed c.1920 and the building was then used to provide emergency housing. One woman raised 12 children in this building!

An extended history is engraved into the pathway on the approach to the Battery, in the information hub, and on information plaques on the upper-level.

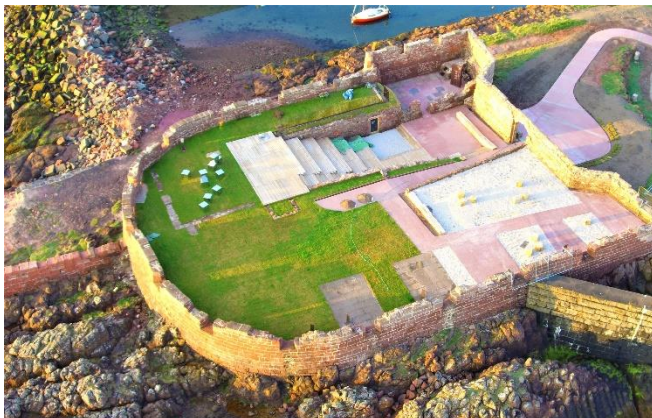
The Battery is a must-visit, as it provides a wonderful insight into the history of the Battery, and a little about the Dunbar Harbours; including information about the many vessels that never reached the safety of the harbour, and lives lost as a result.

The Battery provides a superb location to see some of the most fabulous views of the East Lothian coastline; Bass Rock being one of the many spectacular sights.

Extend your visit to the harbours, where the remains of Dunbar Castle stand. The Castle's most famous moment came when Lady Agnes Randolph, nicknamed Black Agnes for her dark hair and complexion, commanded the successful defence of the castle during a five-month siege by the English. In response to surrender, she replied:

'Of Scotland's King I haud my house,
He pays me meat and fee,
And I will keep my gude auld house,
While my house will keep me.'

The environment is a nature-watchers' paradise, with possible sightings of a large variety of bird species. Terns, Gannets, Shags, Cormorants, and of course, in season, the hundreds of Kittiwakes that breed on Dunbar Castle, are examples of some of the species to be seen. Seals can be seen inside the harbours, and from the Battery walls, pods of dolphins can be clearly seen several times per year, especially on calm days.



About the Battery

In 2017 Dunbar created a special location at the ruined battery on Lamer Island that is available for the public to explore, and enjoy, at almost any time. It also provides a unique venue for groups wishing to engage with the performing arts. Funding from Viridor Credits, Historic Environment Scotland and East Lothian Council made this possible.

The Battery is part of Dunbar's historic harbours, and is owned by Dunbar Harbour Trust. The Battery is managed as a not-for-profit location, open for all to enjoy.

The location is quiet and peaceful, apart from the sounds of nature, that can include the wind off the North Sea, and the cries of the Kittiwakes. Events will take place that respect, and are appropriate for this environment.

Dunbar is called 'Sunny Dunny' for good reason. However, the Battery may be closed for safety reasons, in extreme weather conditions.

Event enquiries and bookings for the Battery can be organised via the Dunbar Harbour Trust.

Email dunbarbattery@gmail.com for further information, or to make a booking enquiry.



Location and Public Transport

The Battery is located at the Dunbar harbours, at the foot of Victoria Street. There is car parking available at the harbours, although this may be restricted during public events. See also the section on car parking for further details on accessible parking within the harbours area.

The nearest railway line is Dunbar train station, which is located on Station Road, Dunbar. The walk from the station to the Battery is approximately 10 minutes.

<https://www.scotrail.co.uk/plan-your-journey/stations-and-facilities/dun>

Regular buses are available on Dunbar High Street, with services provided by East Coast Buses, Eves Coaches Ltd and Border Buses. The accessibility of these bus services should be checked with individual service providers as required. The walk from the nearest bus stop to the Battery is approximately 5-10 minutes.

http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/1526/public_and_community_transport/1633/public_transport_and_private_hire_information

The pedestrian route from the train station, or nearest bus stop, is reasonably accessible, with multiple level access crossings provided.

<https://dunbarbattery.org.uk/location/>

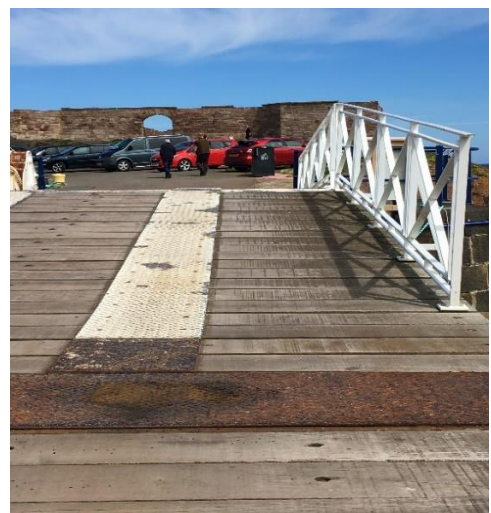


Approach Routes – Pedestrian Access

The immediate approaches to the Battery are by Victoria Street, or Lamer Street, both leading to Victoria Place, which then joins the harbours. Multiple level access crossings are provided along the High Street, including two Zebra Crossings. There are no signal-controlled crossings provided, i.e. Pelican or Toucan Crossings. All level access crossings provide tactile paving at crossing points.



Although the access route to the harbours from Dunbar High Street provides reasonable level access throughout, the journey will require the navigation of a moderate, or steep, downhill route at some point. The recommended route to reach the Battery is via Victoria Street, located at the west end of Dunbar High Street, as this provides the widest access route, with a moderate gradient, from the High Street. On reaching the harbours, a drawbridge requires to be crossed to reach the entrance to the Battery. The drawbridge consists of differing materials, which create an uneven, changeable surface, with a slight change of level in parts. Some individuals may require assistance to navigate the drawbridge.



Car Parking

There are currently two accessible parking bays situated within the harbours.

These are located to the front of the main harbour, near to the RNLI shop, as you approach. The car park is laid to tarmac, with level access provided to the side and rear of the parking spaces. A dropped-kerb is provided nearby to enable access to the main harbour-front walkway. The bays provide free parking.

The accessible parking bays have been provided to a previous standard, and do not meet with current legislation and recommended guidance, i.e. the Building (Scotland) Regulations, or the BS8300 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people'. Some individuals may require assistance to enable safe access, and egress, from a vehicle.

Additional, standard parking, is available within the main harbour area, and near to the Battery.

It may be possible for the Dunbar Harbour Trust to provide additional support for car parking, particularly during public events. Email dunbarbattery@gmail.com for further information and assistance.



Horizontal Circulation – Paths and Ramps

The Battery sits to the right-hand side of the harbour, in an elevated position, as one would expect for a garrison of this type. The approaches and pathways have been vastly upgraded to provide level access ramps and walkways, enabling a safer approach, and greatly improved accessibility. Most routes exceed 1400mm in width.

The approach ramp to the entrance of the Battery, however, is long and quite steep, as is the approach ramp to the upper-level of the Battery. Once inside the Battery, a railing is provided at a height of 1120mm, to the right-hand side of the ramped approach from the entrance to the upper-level. The railing may provide a supportive aid, though some individuals may require additional support to reach the Battery entrance, and the upper-level.



Once the upper-level is reached, the area is a combination of grass and concrete hardstanding, with a wooden platform providing a view of the newly developed amphitheatre and stage. Most of the upper-level area is accessible, with the viewing platform providing level access at the far end. Access to the platform from the pathway, however, requires crossing an area of grass, with intermittent inlaid stone.



Access to some of the finest views of the East Lothian coastline can be obtained from the Battery walls on the upper-level. Level access is provided to many of the viewing points at the embrasures. The wall height at the embrasures varies between 650-700mm. Some have a stone step in front of the embrasure (see picture below); however, most provide access to the wall edge.

An information hub is provided in the lower area of the Battery. It is reached by a ramp to the right after the entrance, measuring approximately 1400mm. This ramp is of a moderate gradient, and is shorter than the ramp leading to the entrance, and the upper-level of the Battery.

The entrance providing access to the information hub, between the stone wall, measures 900mm in width. Level access is provided within the information hub area.

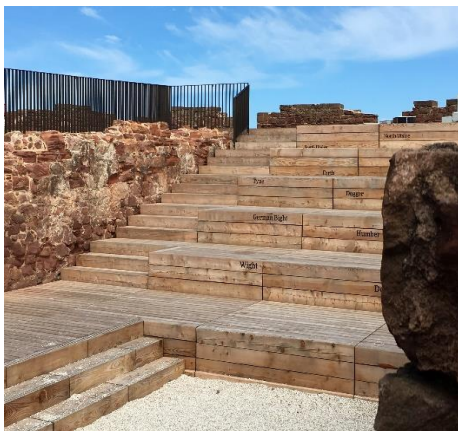


Vertical Circulation – Steps

The newly developed amphitheatre consists of a stage, and seating area, crafted in wood. This area has steps to access from all directions, varying in measurement and flight number. The lowest flight of steps is 3, and the highest 14. Step measurements vary in height from 160mm to 180mm, and depth of 300mm to 350mm. There are steps adjacent to the seating area, providing access to each seating level. These are at the highest height level of 180mm, and lowest depth of 300mm. There is no handrail assistance at the stepped areas. Please note, the steps do not provide colour contrast, or tactile surfacing at the top and bottom. A slip-resistant strip is provided on each step.

Level access is provided to the upper-level area. A viewing platform is located here, where a full view of the stage can be achieved. The platform is reached via the ramp from the entrance. It is worth noting this area is less protected from the changeable Scottish weather conditions.

The Dunbar Harbour Trust appreciate that navigation of the amphitheatre, and seating arrangements, at an event for example, may present challenges for some visitors'. The Trust are keen to ensure that all enjoy the full experience of the Battery and, as such, will assist in any way they can. Please email dunbarbattery@gmail.com to discuss any specific support requirements. Contact should be made well in advance of your visit, to provide adequate time to discuss specific requirements, and to enable arrangements to be put in place.



Toilets

There is no toilet provision at the Battery. However, there is a male and female toilet located within the Harbour area, where it may be possible to arrange access for an individual event. Please contact dunbarbattery@gmail.com

The nearest public toilet is located on Bayswell Road. It is around 10 minutes' walk, or a few minutes' drive, from the Battery. There are two accessible parking bays to the front of this facility. The toilets provide male, female and an accessible toilet. The accessible toilet is located to the left-hand side of the building as you approach. This toilet is permanently locked, a key is provided by the duty attendant. The accessible toilet was erected some time ago, and therefore does not meet with current legislation and recommended guidance, i.e. the Building (Scotland) Regulations, or the BS8300 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people'. Some individuals may require additional support. Please follow the web link for the location and opening times of this facility:

http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/1107/dunbar_town_centre



Male, female, and an accessible toilet - located on the lower level and accessed by a lift, are provided at Dunbar Leisure Centre, which is also approximately 10 minutes', located near to the public toilet. Please follow the web link for location and opening times: http://www.enjoyleisure.com/centre.aspx?comp_id=4



The approach to both the public toilet in Bayswell Road, and Dunbar Leisure Centre, may be challenging for some, as there is reasonably steep gradient to reach these facilities from the harbours. Some individuals may require assistance.

Health & Safety

The Dunbar Harbour Trust take all steps to ensure the Health & Safety of visitors to the Battery. However, this is an open-air, public environment, with no restriction to access at most times - the Trust may restrict access to the Battery in extreme weather conditions. Health & Safety is therefore, primarily, the responsibility of visitors to the area. This report has been written to inform individuals who wish to visit the Battery about the accessibility, enabling the consideration of any additional support requirements an individual might need to ensure a safe, and enjoyable visit.

Communication Support

This Access Statement has been provided in Plain Text format for ease of transcription, and is available on the Battery website www.dunbarbattery.org.uk

The Dunbar Harbour Trust provide guided tours around the Battery. This to ensure all individuals can enjoy the full experience of the Battery, and its history. Visit www.dunbarbattery.org.uk for more information.

Contact

The Battery is owned, and managed, by the Dunbar Harbour Trust. The Directors of the Trust recognise that some areas of the Battery do not meet with recommended accessibility guidance, i.e. BS8300 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people.'

The Directors are keen to ensure that all visitors enjoy the full experience and, as such, seek to make continual improvement to the harbours area and the Battery. Any improvement is subject to relevant consent of the local authority, Historic Environment Scotland, community consultation, and funding.

The Directors welcome your views on your visitor experience, and any recommendations for improvement to the Harbour area, or the Battery.

Write to: Dunbar Harbour Trust, Cromwell Quay, Shore Street, Dunbar, EH42 1SU

Email: dunbarbattery@gmail.com

Website: www.dunbarbattery.org.uk



**DUNBAR
HARBOUR
TRUST**

Gateway to the Forth

N56° 00' W02° 51'



Photographs provided by Access Alba and the Dunbar Harbour Trust.

References:

- Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- BS8300 'Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people' – Code of Practice
- Centre for Accessible Environments, 'Designing for Accessibility'

Access Alba, and the Dunbar Harbour Trust, hope that you have found this access guide useful and informative. If you have any comments, or suggested amendments that you would like to bring to our attention, please email your contributions to info@accessalba.com

We hope you enjoy your visit to this wonderful historic site!

