



Visual Journey

for Relaxed Events at Kielder Observatory

Getting to the Observatory

The observatory is only accessible by car, due to the remote location. Once you have reached the bottom of our track, you will see signs pointing you to the turn-off that accesses the road up to the observatory. The entrance onto the dirt track looks like this:



Once you have turned onto the dirt road, you must continue straight. After approximately 200m, you will see a gate with signs next to it. This gate is opened 1 hour before your event starts. There may even be a member of staff situated at this gate to control the flow of traffic, they may give you instructions.



You must continue through this gate and keep going straight up this track.



After approximately 2 miles, you will reach the top of the track where you will see this:



Here, you will see that you can go straight on to park in our car park and there is a track on the right that runs to the observatory building. Please park in the general car park, unless you need to be dropped off closer to the building itself due to mobility. If you require this, please turn right down this track until you reach the observatory. Once there, you will see that there is space on the right-hand side of the main observatory building for you to park or drop off members of your group.





Once you have arrived, please make your way to the main door of the observatory. This is what it looks like:



The door with our logo on it is the main door, this door will be opened 20 minutes before your event starts. It will be opened by a member of staff that will take the name your booking is made under in order to check you in. One of our toilets is in the door on the right-hand side of the main door. This toilet is wheelchair user friendly.



As the observatory is off grid, we have no water supply and therefore our toilets are composting toilets. There is no flush but there is sawdust you can dispense into the toilet after you are done and hand gel to cleanse your hands. Please also be careful not to drop anything into either of the toilets, as there is no way to retrieve anything if this happens.

After checking in and entering through the main door, you will be seated inside the classroom.



This is where everybody will gather (maximum of 20 guests per relaxed astronomy event) for the start of your event. There will be a short introduction, where we will explain the layout of the building, what will happen during the event and introduce the staff. We will also go through some basic astronomy so that you can better understand the facts and figures we give you throughout your event.

After the introduction, you will be allowed to explore the observatory, learn lots about astronomy and telescopes at the different stations and get hands on with some interactive activities. You may choose to explore the Sir Patrick Moore observatory, situated at the end of the building. You can access the Sir Patrick Moore observatory by leaving the classroom from the fire exit at the opposite side of the classroom from the main door. When you turn right out of the fire exit doors, you will see a walkway.



This walkway runs slightly downhill on a slant. The slant levels out in the middle slightly so be careful this doesn't catch you out! At the end of this walkway, you will see the door leading inside the Sir Patrick Moore Observatory. To the right side of this door you will see some stairs leading down to the track next to the observatory. This is the fire exit for the Sir Patrick Moore Observatory.



Once inside the Sir Patrick Moore Observatory, there is a spiral ramp that leads you into the building. Inside, there is a big telescope.





You may also wish to explore the Gillian Dickinson building. It is placed opposite the main observatory building. This is the main entrance to the Gillian Dickinson building:



Inside the Gillian Dickinson building is another classroom style room, as well as a kitchen/gift shop where you can get a drink, some snacks or souvenirs.



There is also a sliding door that takes you to our state-of-the-art astrophotography suite, where there are some more telescopes.



There is another toilet to the far right of the Gillian Dickinson building.



In between the two buildings, there is an outdoor observation deck area that we sometimes place our manual telescopes when it is clear.



Please be aware that it will likely be very dark when you arrive (similar to the picture below). We use red lighting to allow your eyes to adapt to the dark and optimise your night vision, however if you need more light please ask a member of staff for a torch or feel free to bring your own.



A member of staff will always be more than happy to assist you with anything during your event. If you have any queries or requests, please contact the office by email at admin@kielderobservatory.org

We look forward to seeing you soon!