

# CAMERA OBSCURA & WORLD OF ILLUSIONS

Access Statement: updated October 2018



This document aims to accurately describe our building and the visitor experience we offer, to help all of our visitors enjoy their visit to the fullest. If we have not discussed something you would like further information about, or if you have any questions, please contact us through our website;

 [www.camera-obscura.co.uk](http://www.camera-obscura.co.uk)

or through the contact details below;

 <a href="mailto:info@camera-obscura.co.uk">info@camera-obscura.co.uk</a>	 0131 226 3709
 07541 599484	 @camobscura
 @camobscura	 @camobscura1

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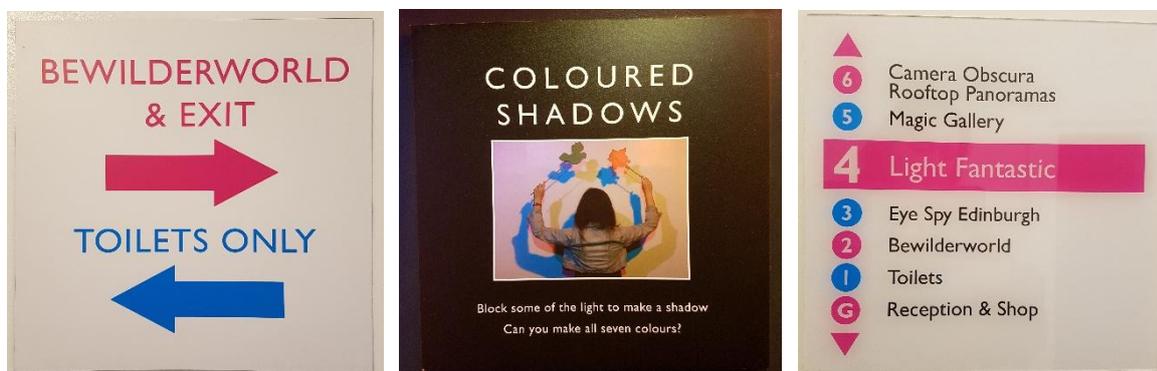
## General Information

### *About Camera Obscura and World of Illusions*

- Camera Obscura and World of Illusions is the oldest purpose-built visitor attraction in Edinburgh, and is number 5 in the top 10 'Things to do in Edinburgh' on Tripadvisor.
- We are open 364 days a year. We are only closed on Christmas day.
- The entire building is accessed by one stairwell of 98 steps. There is no lift access.
- Our admission times change throughout the year.
- The average visit lasts about 2 hours.
- The Camera Obscura show is included in the ticket price.
- It is not necessary to book tickets in advance unless you are a group of 10 or more.
- We offer free entry for carers and a 10% discount for visitors with visual impairments.
- We are very happy to accept assistance (and non-working) dogs into the attraction. We have dog bowls available at the desk on request.
- All staff have disability awareness training.

### *Signs and displays*

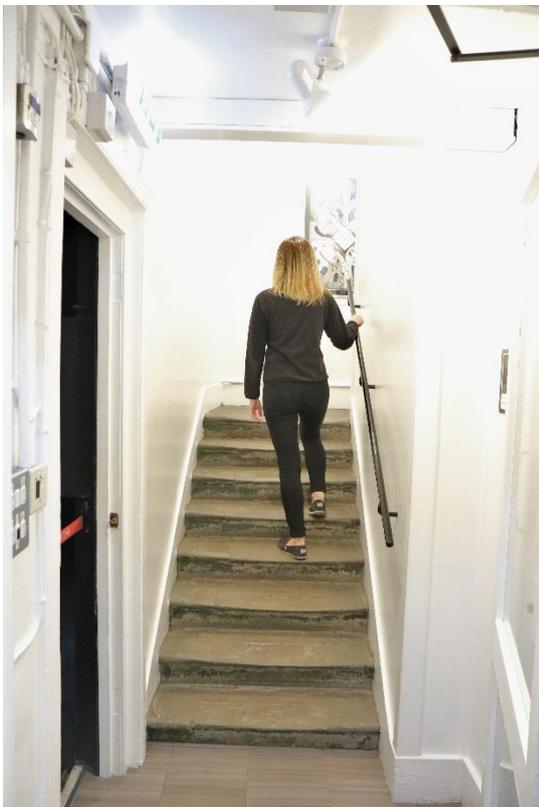
Signs around the Camera Obscura attraction are a mixture of black text on a white background, white text on a black background, white text on a magenta or blue background or magenta/blue text on a white background.



## *Wheelchair users and buggies*

- Our building is not accessible to wheelchairs or buggies
- There is no lift in the building, and there are 98 stairs over 6 floors
- The exhibition floors are too narrow for wheelchairs and buggies to move around, especially in the event of fire evacuation
- All of our entrance doors have at least two steps up and down

Unfortunately, our building is simply too old to support a lift. We hope in the future to be able to work around this, but it means that buggies and wheelchairs must be stored at the ticket desk.



- The stairs are well lit with LED lighting.
- They are generally worn and uneven.
- There is a handrail on one side only.
- The stairwells can become congested during busy times.

We have benches on every floor, and we can book a suitable Camera show slot to give everyone as much time as they need. We also have walking stick chairs available to borrow from the ticket desk.

We are committed to becoming as accessible as our historic building makes possible. Please see our 'Autism Acceptance' section for more examples. Any suggestions or comments are gratefully received.

## **Pre-arrival**

### *Getting more information*

If you have any questions about your visit, we are always available to discuss any concerns and answer any queries. We are contactable by email, phone, Facebook messenger and Whatsapp at any time during our opening hours. We endeavour to respond to any messages within a day.

### *How to get here*

Our full address is;

Camera Obscura and World of Illusions  
549 Castlehill, Royal Mile  
Edinburgh  
EH1 2ND

You can arrive at Camera Obscura and World of Illusions in a number of ways;

#### 1) By bus

The numbers 67, 41, 42, 23 and 27 Lothian buses go along George IV Bridge, which is approximately 3 minutes' walk away. Lothian buses only take exact change for your ticket, which can be purchased on the bus. The City Sightseeing tour bus (red bus) stops at Lawnmarket, adjacent to Castlehill. Tickets can be bought on Waverley Bridge. All Lothian buses are accessible, with dedicated wheelchair and buggy spaces.

#### 2) By taxi

At various times of year, especially August, Castlehill is closed to vehicles. Please contact us if you would like to check whether we are accessible by taxi during your visit. The nearest consistent drop off point is outside the Hub, which is approximately 60m from our entrance. Our staff will happily call a taxi for you at the end of your visit. There are a number of local taxi companies and apps including Uber, Lyft and Gett.

Central Taxis: 0131 229 2468

City Cabs: 0131 228 1211

Capital Cars: 0131 777 7777

### 3) By car

Throughout the year Castlehill is closed to vehicles at various times. Please contact us if you would like to check whether we are accessible by car during your visit. There is no dedicated parking for our building. Street parking is very limited across Edinburgh, and especially difficult around the Royal Mile. The nearest car park is Castle Terrace (EH1 2EW) which is around 0.6km /0.4 miles away.

### 4) By rail

Waverley Railway Station is the nearest station to Camera Obscura, and is about 0.6km/0.4 miles away. It is main station and links to all major destinations. There is a taxi rank outside the station.

### 5) By tram

The nearest tram stop is on Princes St, at the junction of the Mound and Hanover St. The tram costs £1.70 for an adult to all stops except the airport, which is £6.

## Your visit

### Main entrance and ticket desk

There are 2 entrance doors leading to the ticket desk.



*The main door from Castlehill*

The door from Castlehill has 5 steps, which turn right into the building. The steps are 14, 16, 18, 15 and 18 cm high respectively.

The door is 102 cm wide, is manual and the handle is on the left. It opens inwards.

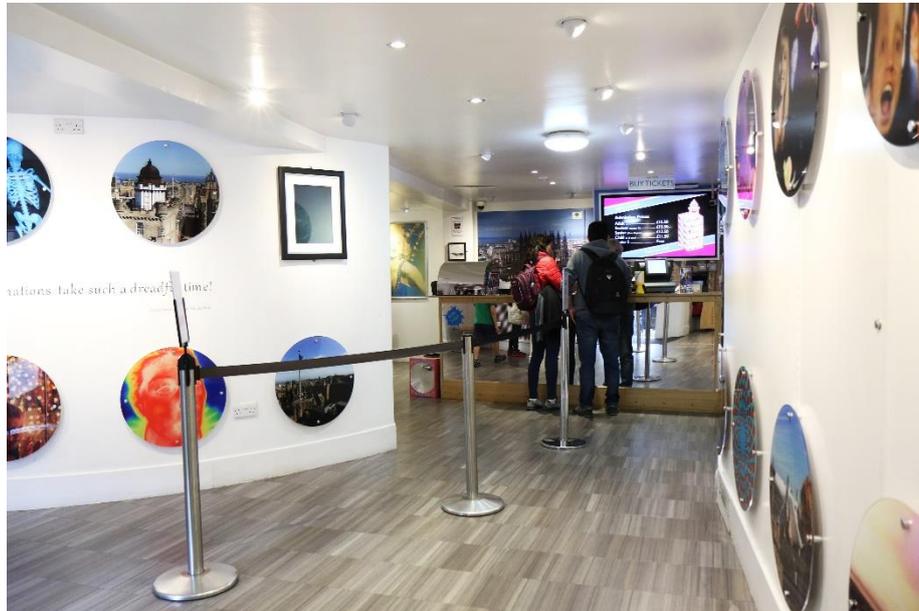


*The door from the courtyard*

The door from the courtyard on Ramsay Lane has one step to access the courtyard (10 cm high) and two steps into the main entrance (18 and 15 cm high).

The door is 102 cm wide, is manual and the handle is on the right. It opens inwards.

The main reception area has vinyl tile flooring and carpeted door mats, and is well lit with LED lighting throughout.



*The ticket desk*

The ticket desk is always manned and is 112 cm high. We are always available to provide information about Camera Obscura and the local area. When there is a queue, we have a staff member on hand to answer any questions including wait times, and we can fast track anyone who is unable to queue. There is one bench in the reception area, which is 46 cm high.

Tickets are usually sold from the till on the right hand side of the desk. If there is one member of staff at the desk, they will process the transaction and explain the ticket. At busy times, we have two staff members – the staff member on the left will explain and talk you through your ticket.

The ticket gives you all the basic information about the tour and the building. We provide it in several languages, and have the following sheet available at the desk for those who prefer the explanation to be written down rather than spoken.

Your **Camera Obscura** show on **floor 6** at the **time on the ticket**.

Please be on level 6, **five minutes before** the time on ticket.

Please **keep** this black ticket! Please show it to staff member on level 6 when you get there.

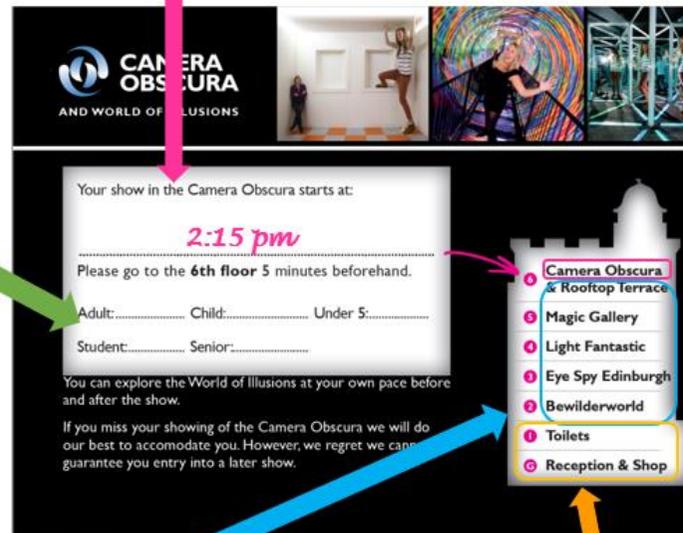
Our wifi code is:

1853



You can pay individually for your ticket.

We put everyone in your group on to one ticket to save paper.



Floors 2-6 have:

**World of Illusions** Museum!

There are fun things you can play with, touch and get inside!

Take lots of **photos!**

Have fun!



**Toilets** are only on the **first** floor.

The **reception** desk and **gift shop** are both on the **ground** floor, beside the **exit**.

## *The Camera Obscura Show*

- is on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of our building
- is at specific times, and is led by a guide
- can fit about 35 people, with approximately 15 seated
- uses sunshine to project an image of Edinburgh
- must be dark in order to work



*View of the stairs leading into the Camera.*

The show happens inside a dark room on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. There are 4 steps from the 6<sup>th</sup> floor into the camera room.

Inside the lights are red to help your eyes adjust to the dark room. The lights are turned out for most of the show.

The guide will close the door and explain the show. Those who are claustrophobic, have a hard time sitting/standing still or who don't like the dark may find the show challenging.

If you need to leave at any point during the show, the guide will be happy to help.

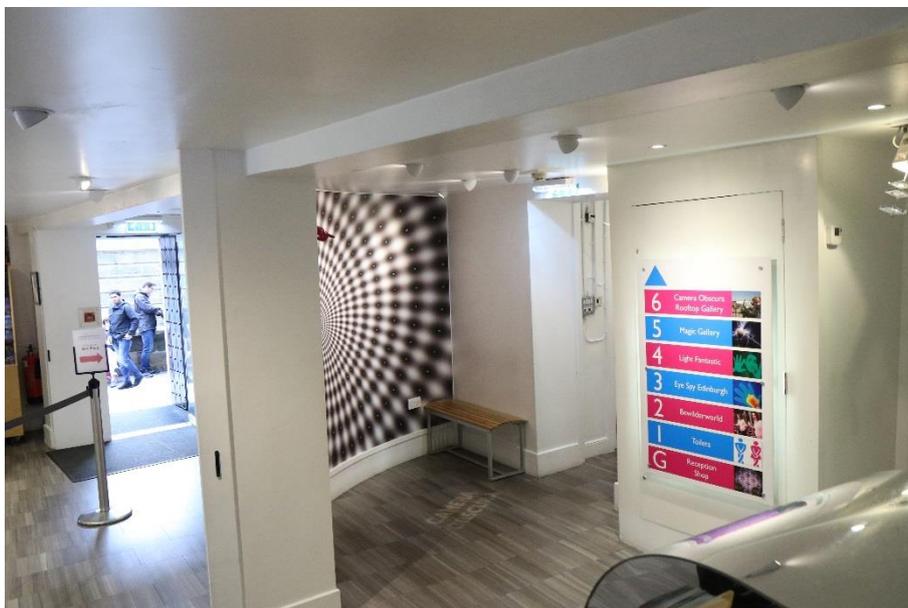


*The Camera Obscura room, showing the red light and seating around the table.*

## *The World of Illusions*

- is a museum, which you explore without a guide
- cover floors 2 to 5 of the building
- is generally very dark or with low lighting
- can be hard to move freely around the floors when we're busy
- has some of our most popular illusions like the Vortex Tunnel
- has at least one bench on every floor
- some areas have loud music

The tour starts from beside the ticket desk.



*The start of the tour as seen from the ticket desk*

Each floor has different games and optical illusions.

1. Toilets (both ladies and gents)
2. Bewilderworld
3. Eye Spy Edinburgh
4. Light Fantastic
5. Magic Gallery
6. Camera Obscura and Rooftop Terrace

Every floor has varying levels of lighting. There are some very dark spaces or spaces lit by UV. Every floor has stepping stools for shorter people to access the exhibits, but that might also cause an obstacle. All the floors are carpeted and have varying levels of background music.



*Eye Spy Edinburgh*

As the building is renovated from terraced housing, each floor has a unique layout and feel.



*Light Fantastic*

Many of the exhibits have a sign beside them to describe them in English. None of the exhibits use flashing lights, though some screens show quick colour changes. There is always a staff member at the desk, the camera, and moving around the building.

## The Gift Shop

Our gift shop is on the ground floor. It can be accessed through 3 different doors, which all have at least 2 steps.



Entrance to shop from Ramsay Lane

The steps from Ramsay Lane are 18 and 15 cm high respectively.



Entrance to shop from courtyard

- The courtyard which leads to the ticket desk also has access to the shop.
- There are 4 steps.
- The glass door into the shop is 102 cm wide.
- It is manual and the handle is on the left.
- The door opens inwards.
- You do not have to visit the Camera Obscura to visit the gift shop.

The shop can be accessed from the ticket desk. There are four steps down into the shop. Most often the shop is visited after exploring the rest of the attraction. In this case you arrive at the shop from the musical stairs.



*The entrance to the shop leading to the ticket desk.*



*The musical stairs leading from the shop.*

The shop is brightly spot lit throughout. There is a variable amount of space between the aisles and displays. The floor is vinyl tile and level. There is constant background music.



*The Camera Obscura gift shop*

## Toilets and baby changing

There are toilets only on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the building. They are the first doors you encounter on your tour.

Baby changing facilities can be found in both the ladies and gents toilets, in the cubicles.

The female toilet has four cubicles. Three of the toilet seats have unusual designs. The fourth is left blank for those who don't want to use an unusual toilet seat. 2 cubicles have a baby changing unit.



*The ladies' bathroom.*



*One of the cubicles, with baby changing.*

The gent's toilet has two cubicles. One toilet seat has an unusual design, the other is blank. There are also three urinals, one of which is lowered. One of the cubicles has a baby changing unit.



*The men's toilet.*



*One of the cubicles, with baby changing.*

## Autism Acceptance

We get a lot of visitors who have ASD. In order to provide the best experience possible, we are currently working towards an Autism Friendly Award from the National Autistic Society.



As part of this effort we are looking at how we interact with visitors with ASD and their families and friends. We have developed a staff training which teaches our staff about autism spectrum disorders and what information will be most useful to someone with an ASD when they visit.

We are also working in conjunction with local autism focussed charities to evaluate our experience and discuss any possible adjustments or procedures we could adopt to make everyone's experience better.

## Accessibility aids

We have a number of accessibility aids available at the ticket desk. These include;

- 2 pairs of child size ear defenders for those sensitive to noise
- Walking stick seats
- Ticket information available in different languages and in written format
- A transcript of the show for those d/Deaf or hard of hearing
- Baby Bjorn carriers for babies up to approximately one year old
- All Day Ticket allowing you to leave and come back in all day

We are always looking for ways to improve our accessibility. Please let us know if you have a suggestion for something we could be doing better.

## First Aid

There is always at least one member of staff that is first aid trained on site at any time. First aiders can be identified by their first aid pin badge showing a white cross on a green background.

