

Pre-Visit Information for Guided Tours

Introduction:

Clearwell Caves is a mining museum established in 1968. There are nine caverns open to the general public and a variety of different activities are offered to groups such as guided tours, caving activities and workshops.

The museum is operated by Clearwell Mine Management Ltd, run by Jonathan and Ray Wright who both hold HSE mining qualifications.

The Caves attract around 50,000 visitors a year, the majority of whom are families and school groups. The Caves are self financing, fundraising events are therefore held throughout the year, such as the Christmas Fantasy, annual Hallowe'en Party, occasional Underground Theatre or story telling events and workshops.

How to find Clearwell Caves:

Our Ordnance Survey grid reference is: SO 576082

We are 1.5 miles south of Coleford town centre. Follow the B4228 road out of Coleford, in the direction of St Briavels and Chepstow, after approximately one mile turn right for Clearwell village (immediately past the Lambsquay Hotel). The sign for the Caves car and coach park is clearly visible after a few hundred metres.

The Caves are clearly indicated as you approach Coleford, there are brown tourism signposts for the Caves around all the approaches to Coleford town centre.

Pre-visit information

Guided tours of the show mine are suitable for all age groups. Children under 16 years old must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Groups are offered a ratio of one accompanying adult free per ten children, to help ensure groups are adequately supervised, this can be increased for groups with special needs, please ask when booking. Clearwell Caves provide an experienced guide for each pre-booked group.

Visitors need to be aware that pathways are uneven, in places steep and occasionally can be wet; it is recommended that they arrive wearing flat soled, strong footwear with a good grip, trainers, wellies or walking boots are examples of appropriate footwear.

The temperature underground is a constant 10 degrees centigrade so feels cool in summer and warm during cold weather. Make sure the group bring warm clothing to put on before going underground, even on a hot summer's day; by wearing a warm jumper or coat, they should remain comfortable throughout their visit.

On arrival:

There is ample car and coach parking provided. Please watch the group closely while getting out of the vehicle and while crossing the parking area. Follow the surfaced footpath from the car park to the entrance.

Book in at the entrance and your mine guide will be with you shortly take your group into the mine. If you have any queries or require help with any matter please ask at the entrance or speak to the guide.

It may be a good idea to ask the group if they wish to use the loos before beginning the underground tour. Loos are located in the tea room and entrance tunnel to the Caves.

Bags can be left with shop staff to save carrying bulky or heavy items during the tour. Valuable items can be locked away, please ask.

During your tour:

Children must remain under adult supervision throughout their visit. Visitors must not leave the pathways, run, climb, throw stones, or jump underground. Where pathways are steeper, visitors should use the handrails provided.

The guided tour normally takes between 1-1.5hrs, if you need to be away at a specific time, let the guide know at the beginning, we are happy to adjust the tour accordingly. If the group have any special requirements or interests the guides are happy to adjust the tour to suit the group whenever possible.

After your tour:

You may wish to visit the shop or tearoom. The shop stocks a wide variety of souvenirs, gifts and minerals, many of them at pocket money prices. As you will exit the Caves through the shop, you may wish to take the group straight through at the end, so they can re-enter the shop in smaller groups with the majority waiting outside.

The tearoom stocks a wide selection of snacks and refreshments.

Visitors using the tearoom or eating packed lunches are advised to wash their hands after their visit and before eating, especially after handling artefacts, rocks or minerals. There are hand wash basins in the tearoom loos and toilets inside the Caves entrance.

I am sure your group will enjoy their visit. If you require any further information or wish to discuss any aspect of your visit please contact me:

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