

VISITING VICARAGE ROAD

Access Statement 2022/23 - Text only version

Welcome to Vicarage Road

The Home of Watford FC

Thank you for choosing to come and watch Watford FC. We are keen that your visit to Vicarage Road will be as enjoyable as possible, so we have put together this information about the accessibility of our stadium and matchday experience. In this guide, you'll find details of our provision for disabled supporters along with information on parking, transport and a stadium map showing all accessible points.

Queries relating to individual home or away match tickets for disabled supporters should be directed to our dedicated mailbox for disabled supporters disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com.

For any queries relating to season tickets, stadium access enquiries or our provision for disabled supporters, please contact EDI & Disability Access Officer Simona Rakovic-Irish simona.rakovic-irish@watfordfc.com.

Watford FC works closely with the 'Watford FC Enables' disabled supporters' association on all matters relating to disabled supporters. Membership is free, further details about the group and how to join can be found on their dedicated website, which can be accessed at www.wfcenables.co.uk

Ordering your tickets

Buying Tickets - We aim to provide a personal service for all disabled supporters. In order to purchase tickets, please call our ticket office hotline on **01923 223023** where our team will be happy to discuss your individual requirements and provide the best ticket available.

At busy times, please use our call-back service by emailing disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com. Please provide your name, FAN ID and phone number, and one of the team will contact you. You are also welcome to buy tickets in person at the Supporter Services and Ticketing Office, which has an accessible drop-counter window and a hearing loop.

If you prefer to purchase tickets on-line, please log on to tickets.watfordfc.com using your FAN ID number. If you believe you should be eligible for either a wheelchair bay or ambulant disabled seating but are not able to access these seats online, please email supporters@watfordfc.com with details.

If you do not yet have a FAN ID number this can be created on-line, in person or over the phone. If creating the FAN ID on-line, please click on 'Log-In/Register' in the top right-hand corner of the home page and follow the on-screen prompts.

Personal Assistant Tickets - Where the need for personal support has been identified, the Club will admit the personal assistant free of charge on the understanding that they are providing a service to the disabled supporter to enable them to access matchday facilities.

The Club requires the disabled person and their PA to enter the ground together and sit together. The personal assistant must be able to communicate effectively with those in the vicinity and must also be physically able to support the disabled person in the event of an emergency.

You will be offered a free personal assistant admission if you are in receipt of Middle or Higher rate components of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (P.I.P.) or attendance allowance, however proof of eligibility may be required before tickets are issued. Other forms of proof may be accepted, please contact disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com for more details.

Ticket Office Access - Our ticket office is fully accessible. There is step and ramp free access via an automatic door and non-slip surfaces are around the office itself. A dropped counter and induction loops are available inside and at the accessible window. The queueing system is fully managed on

matchdays and our staff will be available to provide any additional support you require.

Getting to Vicarage Road

By Train/Tube - The nearest stations to the stadium are Watford High Street (0.6 miles, 12 mins walk), Watford Underground (1 mile, 20 mins walk) and Watford Junction (1.1 miles, 25 mins walk).

Watford Junction Station has the most accessible facilities. The station is on the West Coast Mainline and fast trains arrive regularly from London Euston.

Services are run by London Northwestern Railway and Avanti West Coast Trains.

- Accessible taxis are available from the front of the station
- Buses to the stadium are also available
- Induction Loop is situated in the ticket office
- Staff available for additional assistance, which can be pre-booked up to 24 hours in advance
- Accessible toilets are also available – Staff are able to provide Radar Keys
- Wheelchairs are available for use

Watford High Street Station has a single island platform which can be accessed by staircase only, there is no ramp or step free access. An induction loop is situated in the ticket office and staff are available to provide additional support. Services are run by London Overground.

Watford Underground station is on the Metropolitan line. This station also has a single island platform which can be accessed by staircase only, there is no ramp or step free access. Staff are available to provide additional support.

By Bus - A number of buses (10, 20, 320, 321, 324 and W1) run from bus stop 2 at Watford Junction station. Frequent services are run by Arriva and Red Rose Travel and take around 20 minutes. All buses are low floor accessible and supporters should alight at Whippendell Road, which is approximately 15 minutes walk from the stadium.

Getting to Vicarage Road

Parking and Drop-off Points - We provide a limited number of parking bays for wheelchair users, which are located behind the Graham Taylor Stand in the hospital grounds. These must be booked in advance.

There is step free access to the Rookery, Lower Graham Taylor and Sir Elton John stands. All traffic will be held back for a short while after the match to ensure clear access for pedestrians.

We also provide parking spaces for ambulant disabled supporters in the nearby Laurance Haines School in Vicarage Road, which is approximately 7 minutes' walk from the stadium. We provide a shuttle service to bring supporters to and from the stadium. Spaces can be booked in advance by home supporters only and are subject to availability.

Spaces are also allocated directly to each away club, supporters should contact their own Supporter Services team or equivalent for more details.

Maps showing access routes for each car park can be provided on request when booking your space.

Drop off points are also available at the junction of Farraline Road and Vicarage Road, at the junction of Vicarage Road and Banbury Street, and behind the Graham Taylor Stand in the hospital grounds.

To book a space in any of these car parks, or for more details of the drop-off points, please call our ticket office hotline on **01923 223023** or email your request to: disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com

When parking is not available at the stadium, further disabled parking spaces can be found at the Church multi-storey Car Park in Watford Town Centre.

By Car- Directions to the Church Car Park

From the North or East, join the M25 and exit at Junction 20. Take the first exit onto the A41 to Watford. At the next roundabout, take the second exit onto A411 (Hempstead Road). Continue along Hempstead Road until you reach the town centre. At the large roundabout take the second exit feeding into the inner ring road, which is a one way system. Stay in the righthand lane and follow the Ring Road until you see the entrance to the Church car park on your right hand side.

From the South or West, join the M25 and exit at Junction 19. At the end of the link road, take the third exit onto A411 (Hempstead Road) Once on Hempstead Road, follow the directions detailed above.

From Central London, join the M1 and exit at Junction 5. Take the second exit onto the A4008. Cross the first roundabout, then take the second exit at the next towards the town centre. At the traffic lights, turn left onto the inner ring road at the T-junction and filter across to the right-hand lane. Follow the Ring Road until you see the entrance to the Church car park on your right hand side.

If travelling to the stadium on a non- matchday, follow any of the directions above and stay in the left hand lane when reaching the ring-road until you see the sign for Vicarage Road.

Please note that Vicarage Road is closed to traffic 2 hours prior to kick-off on matchdays.

If using sat-nav the club's postcode is **WD18 0ER**.

Viewing Areas

Accessible viewing areas are available in the Rookery, Lower Graham Taylor, Upper Graham Taylor and Sir Elton John Stands. Visiting supporter facilities are available in the Vicarage Road Stand. There is personal assistant space available in all areas. Dedicated matchday disabled liaison officers are also posted in all areas.

Rookery Stand - This stand has 12 wheelchair spaces and 39 amenity/easy access spaces at elevated level. There are also 34 wheelchair spaces and 30 amenity/easy access spaces at pitch level. Step-free access to all spaces is via the accessible entrance next to turnstiles 29-36. Two accessible toilets are available in the concourse, and another is accessible from the pitchside positions. All accessible toilets are Radar Key operated and have support rails and alarm cords fitted.

Sir Elton John Stand - This stand has 10 wheelchair spaces at elevated level. Access is via the accessible entrance next to turnstiles 23-24. Step-free access is via a passenger lift. An accessible toilet is available at the lift exit point which is Radar key operated and has support rails and alarm cords fitted. There are also 11 amenity/easy access spaces at elevated level and 16 amenity/easy access spaces in the front row. Step-free access is via the accessible entrance next to Rookery turnstiles 29-36. An accessible toilet is available in the concourse, which is Radar Key operated and has support rails and alarm cords fitted.

Vicarage Road Stand - This stand has 30 wheelchair spaces at elevated level for visiting supporters, 10 towards the back of the stand and 20 towards the front. There are also 20 amenity/easy access spaces at elevated level 9 towards the back of the stand and 11 towards the front. Access to the higher positions is via the accessible entrance next to turnstiles 15-18. Wheelchair positions are step-free, amenity/ easy access spaces have 8 steps with hand rails. An accessible toilet is available on the concourse, which is Radar Key operated and has support rails and alarm cords fitted. Access to the front positions is via the accessible entrance next to turnstiles 23-24. An accessible toilet is

available in the Sir Elton John stand concourse, which is Radar Key operated and has support rails and alarm cords fitted.

Upper Graham Taylor Stand - This stand has 24 amenity/easy access spaces at elevated level. Access is via the accessible entrance next to turnstiles 1-11. There are four steps up to the seats. An accessible toilet is available in the concourse, which is Radar Key operated and has support rails and alarm cords fitted.

Lower Graham Taylor Stand - This stand has 59 wheelchair spaces and 14 amenity/easy access spaces at elevated level. Access is via the accessible entrances next to turnstiles 37-43 and turnstiles 1-11. Step-free access is via a platform lift from turnstiles 37-43 or a passenger lift from turnstiles 1-11. Accessible toilets are available in the concourse, which are Radar Key operated and have support rails and alarm cords fitted. A further 12 amenity/easy access spaces are available in the front row, which are accessed via the accessible entrance next to Rookery turnstiles 29-36 and have step-free access.

Matchday

Countdown to Kick Off - Please note the following times are for 3.00pm Kick-Offs, time will be adjusted accordingly for other kick-off times.

9.00am - The Hornets Shop Stadium Store Open

9.00am - Ticket Office and Collections Open - for up to date details on all Ticket Office Opening Hours please phone **01923 223023**

1.30pm - Turnstiles Open

3.00pm - Kick Off

Matchday updates will be available via our Supporter Services team [@WatfordFCHelp](#) on Twitter

Roadies - The matchday meet-and-greet team of Vicarage Roadies can be found on the approaches to and around Vicarage Road stadium from at least 90 minutes before kick-off. They are happy to provide help, guidance and the answers to any questions you might have when arriving at the stadium.

Matchday Programme - No visit to Vicarage Road is complete without picking up a copy of the matchday programme - available at the stadium before every Watford home game.

Featuring an exclusive column from the Watford Head Coach, in-depth interviews with players past and present, a detailed look at the Hornets' opponents, all the on-pitch and behind-the-scenes club news, as well as fun quizzes and games for younger fans. The programme costs £3.50 to purchase and is available from The Hornets Shop as well as various vendors situated around the stadium.

You can also request a digital version by emailing: disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com

Sensory Room

Places in our Sensory Room, which enables children on the autism spectrum to enjoy football in a calm environment, are available for booking on matchdays.

The room features a comfortably furnished viewing area, with an excellent view of the action and a state-of-the-art calming area featuring a bubble tube, fibre-optic carpet, soft seating, wall projectors, a glitter-ball with a colour wheel and a Bluetooth speaker system so that visitors to the room can choose their own music if the game becomes too distressing for their child.

The room is managed by fully-trained staff with a background in working with children on the autism

spectrum and is accessible from Vicarage Road. The room is also fully wheelchair accessible.

Places will be subject to availability and a letter from a doctor/ consultant or other healthcare professional confirming diagnosis of Autism Spectrum disorder may be required when booking.

Parents will also have the option to visit the Room before matchday, if they wish to check the suitability of the room. For more details about the Sensory Room or to book places please contact Simona Rakovic-Irish, EDI and Disability Access Officer, on **01923 496262** or email disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com.

Changing Places

As well as housing an accessible toilet, the Changing Places facility at Vicarage Road includes a height adjustable adult-sized changing bench, mobile hoist, shower, a screen to allow some privacy as well as a wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench. The facility is ideally positioned near both wheelchair and amenity/easy access spaces in the South West Corner, between the Rookery and Lower Graham Taylor Stands. Those seated in other areas of the stadium will also be able to access the facility by speaking to our matchday disabled liaison officers. Should supporters wish to be seated near the Changing places facility, our ticket office staff will be happy to discuss all individual requirements and help with booking tickets in the closest spaces.

Hidden Disability Cards

We provide cards to all supporters with a hidden disability, containing messages relating to their particular needs, which can be given to any member of staff to enable supporters to access all of the disabled facilities.

Supporters wishing to apply for a card should email their name, Fan ID and details of which card or cards they would like to disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com. We may ask for supporters to send proof of eligibility, in some cases.

The cards available include:

- Please wait for me to sit down, in case I fall
- Please be patient, I have a hidden disability
- Please be patient, I am visually impaired
- Please be patient, I have difficulty in speaking
- Please face me and speak clearly, I lip read
- Please help me find my seat
- Please be patient, I have had a stroke
- Please be direct, I have autism
- Please count out my change with me
- Please scan my ticket for me
- Please be aware I have epilepsy
- Please speak slowly, I am hard of hearing

The Hornets Shop

Vicarage Road Stadium - The Hornets Shop is located on Vicarage Road, at the stadium and is open 7 days per week. On match days, there are several pop-up Hornets shops open inside the stadium. All shops can be extremely busy on match days however we recommend visiting the main store around two hours before kick-off if you require a quieter shopping experience.

If shopping outside of a match day, the main Hornets shop provides parking spaces, directly outside

the shop, on Occupation Road.

The shop is fully accessible. There is step free and ramp free access into the store, via an automatic door. When in the store, you will find non-slip surfaces, full wheelchair accessible aisles, a dropped till counter for easier payment, and an induction loop at the till point. There is also an accessible toilet, by request only. All staff are trained to assist fans and customers with Hidden disabilities.

The shop has a fully managed till queue system on all matchdays, and all staff are available to provide any additional support or information you may require. If you prefer to do your Watford FC shopping online, visit www.thehornetsshop.co.uk. The 'Reciteme' accessibility tool is enabled on the website to assist any visually impaired or blind customers to shop online.

The Hornets Shop also provides a Click and Collect service. For disabled fans on matchdays, we can also bring your Click and Collect items directly to your seat, ready for the start of the game. If you would like to use this option, then process your click and collect order as normal. On the 'delivery instructions box' highlight to us that you require your items bringing to your seat, and let us know where you are located in the stadium including your seat number. Alternatively, please contact us, in advance of the game, at mailorder@watfordfc.com once you have completed your order online. Please allow one hour minimum.

From early March, every Tuesday morning The Hornets Shop at The Vic will allow for inclusive shopping. This will involve screens and music being turned off to provide a comfortable shopping experience for those with sensory needs.

ATRIA Watford - The Hornets shop ATRIA is located inside the ATRIA shopping mall in central Watford. The shop is located on the upper mall, in-between Marks and Spencer and Hotel Chocolate.

The shop offers a wheelchair friendly environment, step free and ramp free access, and the store team will always provide a personal and assisted shopping experience for all.

If you need any assistance and would like to contact us, then do so at: Atriestore@watfordfc.com Or phone: **01923 496274**

The ATRIA centre provides accessible parking spaces, step-free access and disabled toilet facilities throughout the centre. For more details please visit their website: <https://www.watford-shopping.co.uk/misc/centre-info/services>

Additional Information

Soccer Sight - The club has 21 Soccer Sight headsets, so that visually impaired supporters can sit in any part of the ground and listen to the commentary provided by volunteers from the Watford Hospital Radio team. Please email: disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com or call our Supporter Services team on **01923 223023** in advance of your visit with your name and seat number to order a headset. Headsets can be provided on a seasonal basis and are also available to visiting supporters.

Ear Defenders - The club has pairs of Ear Defenders available for use across the stadium. Please email: disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com or call our supporter services team on **01923 223023** in advance of your visit with your name and seat number to order a pair, which can be collected from the Sky Lounge Reception on Vicarage Road when you arrive at the stadium and returned there after the match.

Watford FC Women - Watford FC Women will be playing their home matches at Grosvenor Vale, home of Wealdstone FC. To check access information for these matches, please contact disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com

Hospitality - Inclusivity is at the heart of Watford FC's Matchday Hospitality offering: all six hospitality lounges have full lift access, as well as audio commentary on request and a hearing loop at all

reception areas. We also can cater for any special dietary requirements.

Please contact sales@watfordfc.com or call **01923 496006** to discuss personal requirements ahead of your visit.

Food and Drink - A drop counter and induction loop is also available in all kiosks throughout the stadium. Our staff at the catering kiosks will be happy to read out our menus.

The Hornet's Nest Bar - The Hornet's Nest Bar is a matchday bar for home supporters located in the concourse opposite Turnstiles 1-11 at the corner of the Graham Taylor and Ann Swanson Family Stands. This is an accessible enclosed room and offers supporters a pre-match option during colder weather.

Stadium Evacuation - Evacuation procedures will be advised by the matchday Disability Liaison Officer and stewarding teams in the event of an evacuation being necessary.

Assistance Dogs - Assistance dogs are welcome at Vicarage Road. Should you wish to bring your assistance dog along, please call the supporter services team on **01923 223023** or email disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

Away Match Travel - We provide Wheelchair facilities on the official club coach travel to away games. Please call the supporter services team on **01923 223023** or email: disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com to book a space on the coaches.

Mobility Aid Storage - Storage is provided for wheelchairs and walking frames for those supporters who are able to transfer into a seat. Please ask our matchday Disability Liaison Officer and stewarding teams for details when you arrive at the stadium.

Colour Contrast - Signage around the stadium is gold type on a black background and our concourses are painted in highly visible colours, offering contrast between floors and walls.

Feedback - Watford FC welcomes all feedback relating to our provision for disabled supporters. Please send any comments to disabled.supporters@watfordfc.com.

You can also leave a review on the website of Level Playing Field, which is a registered charity in England and Wales, and acts as a campaigning and advisory organisation to its membership and other parties across all sports. Watford FC works closely with staff from LPF to ensure we are meeting our obligations to provide a fully accessible stadium. <https://www.levelplayingfield.org.uk/club/watford/>

We are also listed on Euan's Guide, the disabled access review website that aims to 'remove the fear of the unknown' and inspire people to try new places. <https://www.euansguide.com/venues/vicarage-road-watford-6600/location>