

Access statement Tarxien

INTRODUCTION

We at the Tarxien Temples welcome all kind of visitors, and strive to make your stay with us as enjoyable as possible. If you have got any accessibility concerns please contact us before your visit, and we will help address these concerns.

The Tarxien Temples site consists of a complex of four megalithic structures built between 3600 and 2500 BC and re-used between 2400 and 1500 BC. Discovered in 1913 by local farmers, the site was extensively excavated between 1915 and 1919, with a number of minor interventions carried out in the 1920s, by Sir Themistocles Zammit, Director of Museums at the time.

The earliest of the four structures, located at the easternmost end of the site and built sometime between 3600 and 3200 BC, survives only to near ground level although its five-apse plan is still clearly visible. The South Temple, the most highly decorated of megalithic buildings with its relief sculpture and the lower part of a colossal statue of a skirted figure, and the East Temple, with its well-cut slab walls and 'oracle' holes, were built between 3150 and 2500 BC. The Central Temple was constructed with its unique six-apse plan and contains evidence of arched roofing.

Of the four structures, three were substantially reconstructed by Zammit during the excavation itself with further interventions taking place in the 1960s. They contain highly decorated stone blocks and screens, reliefs of domestic animals and spirals, the colossal statue and a number of altars, one of which contained a flint knife and animal bones. Their location and the relationship with the temple itself are our best indications of the type of activities which took place on site. Tarxien has also contributed to the study of the construction of these megalithic structures with the discovery of stone spheres which have been interpreted as being stone rollers, used as aids to transportation of the megaliths. Remains of cremation found at the centre of the South temple indicate that the site was re-used as a Bronze Age cremation cemetery, between 2400 and 1500 BC.

PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

The journey can be planned by the use of <https://www.google.com/maps/> simply input 'Tarxien Temples, Triq It-Tempji Neolitici, Tarxien' and follow the directions from your location. Tarxien Temples can be reached by bus with the closest bus stop only a few metres away from the site.

For the most updated information about bus routes and timetables please see - <https://www.publictransport.com.mt/en/visiting-malta> . The Bus Stop called 'Neolitici' is the closest one to the Tarxien Temples. Descending from the bus, turn the left corner whilst keeping to the same sidewalk. The Tarxien Temples are located 2 minutes away up the street. Street signs from Paola centre also clearly indicate the path to the site. Coaches and minivans have got a designated parking area on the opposite side of the entrance to the complex.

Free public parking bays are available on the streets surrounding the complex. The roads around the site are all made of tarmac. A blue badge parking bay is available free of charge near the entrance. The south route of the CitySightseeing buses also takes you close to the Tarxien Temples, from where you can easily walk to the site.

THE COMPLEX

ENTRANCE

The main door of the visitor centre serves as both the entrance and the exit to the site. It is 130cm wide and is kept open during opening hours. A small step measuring 4cm leads from the sidewalk into the visitor centre. Another door forming an antechamber has to be physically opened in order to gain access, and has the same width as the main door. Another door of the same width leading from the visitor centre to the site opens automatically.

RECEPTION, GIFTSHOP AND TICKETING AREA

This area is on the ground floor level, with no steps within it, a small 2cm ledge leads to the outside area. The floor is tiled and the area is illuminated by means of overhead lighting. The area is also climatically controlled.

Cushioned seating is found in the area. A Wheelchair is available for loan free of charge on request.

The site gift shop is situated in one wing of the main area. This gift shop contains books, jewellery, souvenirs etc. Beverages are also available for purchase from the gift shop. The shop is wheelchair accessible, although some items are displayed on high shelves. Visitors should ask staff for assistance if required.

In the other wing of the main area two glass cabinets contain artifacts. These artifacts might not be visible below 79cm. A display of other stone artifacts is also held in the area. Touching artifacts and megaliths is not permitted due to conservation issues.

THE MEGALITHIC REMAINS

Information panels are found in points of interest around the attraction at a height of 100cm. Images are found on the information panels where relevant. The information panels are in Maltese and English.

A free app is available for visitors. A premium version of the app is also available and includes additional content such as games, 3D representations of the objects excavated on-site, and an extensive audio guide. Both versions of the app are available in Maltese, English, German, Italian, French and Spanish.

An elevated walkway surrounds the megalithic structures and allows visitors access to specific areas within the structures. This walkway is accessible through a ramp, and is completely wheelchair accessible for wheelchairs 60cm wide or less. Visitors can make use of a wheelchair found on-site free of charge during their visit if their wheelchair is larger than 60cm.

An information sheet highlighting particular features of the site is distributed free of charge from the ticketing area.

Seating and waist bins are available at specific points in the site. A rest area is also available in the southern section of the site.

A large protective shelter is found over the ancient structures. This other than protecting the megaliths, also protects the visitors in inclement weather.

Touching the Megaliths, eating, smoking and step off the walk way are not permitted inside the Temple.

Toilets

Toilets are located on the ground floor of the complex and are accessible from the outside area of the site. The door to the toilets opens outwards to the left, the opening is 100cm. There are three cubicles measuring 70cms and another cubicle which is wheelchair accessible measuring 90cms. In the accessible toilet one find a wall mounted horizontal nappy changing table, weight resistance 30kgs.

All toilets are Unisex, and the area is well lit by means of fluorescent lighting.

Additional Information

All of our staff are regularly trained and are there in order to make your visit as pleasant as can be. Our staff will happily answer queries about local eateries and other areas of interest nearby. The staff will also put forward any questions of an archaeological nature to the curators of the site, who will see that the query is answered in a timely manner.

We welcome trained assistance dogs. A water bowl is available on request. We regret that pets are not permitted anywhere in the Museum. Dogs are, however, permitted in the grounds if they are held in the hands of the owner throughout their stay.

Contact Information -

Address – Tarxien Temples, Neolithic Temples Street, Tarxien TXN1063.

Telephone - +356 21695578

Email - info@heritagemalta.org

Website - www.heritagemalta.org



Tarxien Temples are open Monday to Sunday from 09.00 till 17.00hrs. Tarxien Temples are not open on the 24th, 25th & 31st of December, 1st of January, and on Good Friday.

If you have any problem or suggestion regarding the accessibility of this portal, please write to us to enable us to respond in a helpful manner. Do let us know the nature of the problem along with your contact information.

Future plans

A small picnic area will offer another dimension to visitors, with a place where they can enjoy the surroundings in a tranquil environment being made available. The illumination of the walkway and the surrounding area will also offer a different experience to the visitors from the one they are used to.