

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can use beach equipment?

Equipment can be used by anyone in Northern Ireland who is a member of the Mae Murray Foundation and will benefit from equipment to assist with mobility. Membership is free of charge and is open to anyone over the age of 18: either with mobility difficulties, or has a family member under the age of 18 with mobility difficulties. Membership forms can be completed in advance of arriving or upon arriving at the beach. Please bear in mind you may need assistance to propel a beach wheelchair and must bring your own help as we cannot provide this.

Overseas visitors can also use the beach equipment upon completion of a Temporary Visitor Registration form.

Can equipment be pre-booked?

Yes Mae Murray Foundation members can pre-book equipment by completing an online booking form at www.maemurrayfoundation.org which goes directly to Benone Visitor Centre. We recommend pre-booking to ensure availability of your chosen equipment and to avoid disappointment. Please give a minimum of 48 hours notice to enable staff at the Visitor Centre to respond with availability or confirmation.

Can I simply turn up at the beach?

We cannot guarantee that equipment will be available without pre-booking.

Where is Benone Visitor Centre?

Benone Visitor Centre is at Benone Tourist Complex. When you arrive at the complex continue straight ahead for the Visitor Centre. Blue badge parking is available directly opposite the centre.

How do I know if equipment will suit my needs?

Descriptions of equipment can be found on the Mae Murray Foundation website at www.maemurrayfoundation.org and should you have any further questions please call Alix on 07900 278 780.

How much does it cost?

We want beaches to be accessible so there is no charge for loan of beach equipment. However, the scheme is maintained by Mae Murray Foundation, a non-profit organisation, registered with the Charities Commission N.I. so donations are very welcome to maintenance and improvements to services.

You will be asked to provide a £25 deposit and ID in the form of passport or driving licence, which is refundable upon return of equipment without damage.

Is a hoist available?

Yes we have a portable hoist onsite to assist with transfers where this is needed, but it is essential that you bring your own sling. Staff are not permitted to operate the hoist, attach your sling, nor are they permitted to execute the actual transfer or assist with any lifting or handling – so please don't ask. It remains the member's responsibility to provide the sling, ensure that it is correctly attached to the spreader bar, is appropriate for use and that accompanying care/family member is competent to operate.

Is a changing bench available?

A portable shower trolley is available for use. For dimensions or more information please see description at www.maemurrayfoundation.org

Where is the equipment located?

You must always go firstly to the reception desk at Benone Visitor Centre to complete essential paperwork. Equipment is stored nearby.

Where can the beach equipment be used?

Our equipment may be used on Benone beach to/from the toilet block and within the Visitor Centre Complex. It is not permitted to leave the boundary.

When can I use the equipment?

The scheme operates a changing timetable all the year round, dependent upon lifeguard presence. For the most up to date information, please check Mae Murray Foundation website or email info@maemurrayfoundation.org

Will help be available?

Beach staff will be able to demonstrate the features of all our equipment but are not able to assist in transfers and cannot take you onto the beach. Equipment users must have an adult helper to assist with transfers and pushing of chairs where needed. Helpers must be fit enough to push the chairs across the sand. Flat footwear is recommended.

Can I store my personal wheelchair whilst on the beach?

You may store your chair in the council storage area but should note that council cannot be responsible for any damage occurring whilst on council property. Alternatively you could return your personal chair to your car.

What if I need to cancel?

Please email benone.complex@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk as soon as you know you need to cancel so that equipment can be reallocated.

Members who book but repeatedly fail to turn up or cancel will have their advance booking facility withdrawn.

How do I stay safe in the elements?

Even when cloudy it's possible to get burnt so please do use sun protection. The wind can be very cold so please make sure you have plenty of warm clothing or a change of clothes in case it rains.

How do I safely use the equipment?

It is essential to read and understand the detailed Terms & Conditions which can be found at www.maemurrayfoundation.org prior to booking.

Comments and Feedback

This project is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland so please help us understand what we are doing well and also how we can improve, so that your day out at the beach can be as fun and as stress-free as possible.

A 'beach equipment' comments form is available at Benone Visitor Centre or you can email the Mae Murray Foundation directly to info@maemurrayfoundation.org