



2014-18

The Great War Centenary

Great War Centenary

TIPS FOR VISUALLY
IMPAIRED VISITORS







Flanders Fields formed the dramatic backdrop for some of the bloodiest battles of the First World War for four long years. One hundred years after WWI broke out, the region's landscape still tells the story of the war. It is home to hundreds of monuments and cemeteries that hold great historical significance for people all over the world.

We created this brochure in collaboration with the accessibility agency of Flanders, Inter, and the West-Flanders Province. Visitors from all over the world and of all ages, some of whom will have some form of accessibility requirement, are currently travelling to the area. The brochure contains all aspects of an accessible journey or daytrip: information and reception, cafes and restaurants, sites, museums, public services, transport, assistance and care... We hope it helps visitors with a disability or need for care to prepare a daytrip or holiday in the Westhoek.

**Do you wish to read the story
behind the remembrance of the
Great War?**

**Visit www.flandersfields.be or
www.visitflanders.com >
Flanders Fields.**

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WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND THIS BROCHURE?



BROCHURE 'CENTENARY OF THE GREAT WAR ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL'

In collaboration with the Flemish Accessibility Agency 'Inter Vlaanderen' and the province of West-Flanders, we realized the brochure 'Great War Centenary – accessible to all'. It provides slightly older tourists and holiday makers with a temporary or permanent disability or people in need of some extra comfort or care while on holiday with all of the necessary information in order to prepare for a visit to

the Flanders Fields area. It takes into account all aspects of an accessible stay: information and reception, accommodation, restaurants, cafés, great war sites, transportation, parking spaces, assistance and care, etc., ... Although most of the information is primarily intended for those with mobility problems, the brochure also reports on initiatives offering additional facilities for other forms of disabilities.

BROCHURE 'CENTENARY OF THE GREAT WAR ACCESSIBLE FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED VISITORS'

This additional brochure was realized in order to give an overview of those museums, events and other places of interest that offer extra facilities for people with a visual impairment. Those facilities are being indicated by the following symbol:



Whether a museum or another place of interest is accessible depends to a large extent on the person concerned. After all, each disability or limitation is different. We therefore also recommend that you always contact the venue concerned beforehand to get the information you need from your own perspective.



NOT TO
BE
MISSED

EXPLORE THE YPRES SALIENT

From October 1914 to October 1918 the battlefield of the First World War was located a mile or two from the centre of Ypres. The trenches described a curve from north to south around Ypres. No fewer than fifty bloody battles were fought in that notorious Ypres Salient. In October 2015 three new entry points opened along the Ypres Salient. Today's landscape is shown as a witness of the past, 100 years ago, in a historical film, three walking routes, a digital application and a cycling route that connects the three points.



The wooden walkways contain some stairs and steep slopes. The grass paths can be rather sodden and muddy in rainy weather. Therefore some assistance is advisable.

Entry point North
Farm Klein Zwaanhof
Kleine Poezelstraat 52
8904 Ieper (Boezinge)

Entry point East
Hooge Crater Museum
Meenseweg 467
8902 Ieper (Zillebeke)

Entry point South
Palingbeek provincial park
Palingbeekstraat 18
8902 Ieper (Zillebeke)

COMING WORLD REMEMBER ME LAND ART INSTALLATION

 **EVENT**

from 30 March 2018 to 11 November 2018
Palingbeek provincial park

Tens of thousands of people from Flanders and all around the world helped to create Coming-WorldRememberMe. Together, they made the 600,000 statues. Each statue has a dog tag, the universal system of identification for frontline soldiers. Every tag is engraved with the name of a First World War victim and the name of the statue maker. In a very literal way, it unites different nationalities and different generations in common remembrance. The combined engagement of all the people involved in the project transforms the land-art installation into a symbol of peace that transcends both time and geographical borders.

From April 2018 until the end of the year, you will be able to combine your visit to the pavilion with a walk that also starts from there. At various rest points along the route you can listen to war poetry. The walk ends at a viewing platform that offers a breath-taking panorama over the impressive land-art installation.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE
ACCESSIBILITY OF THIS EVENT:
PIETER.REMMERIE@INTER.VLAANDEREN.BE



DISCOVER THE WESTHOEK BY BIKE!

The Westhoek area offers you wonderful cycling trails in the beautiful nature: cycle along little pathways, and visit the various battlefields and discover how the profound impressions of the Great War remain today. You can map out your own cycling itinerary (www.fietsroute.org/Cycle-Networks.php) or get inspired by the suggested WW I Cycle Routes (www.fietsroute.org/Great_War_Centenary_Cycling_Flanders.php).

FLANDERS FIELDS IN 48 HOURS



DAY 1



MEMORIAL MUSEUM
PASSCHENDAELE



LIJSENTHOEK MILITARY
CEMETERY AND VISITOR CENTRE



TALBOT HOUSE



LAST POST/ MENIN GATE

DAY 2



IN FLANDERS FIELDS MUSEUM



BAYERNWALD



THE YSER TOWER



MEMORIAL MUSEUM PASSCHENDAELE 1917 (MMP1917)

Berten Pilstraat 5a, 8980 Zonnebeke
 +32 (0)51 77 04 41
info@passchendaele.be
www.passchendaele.be

The Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 presents the historic story of the First World War in a poignant and vivid way, with a particular emphasis on the Battle of Passchendaele. This battle in 1917 is known as one of the most horrific battles from the First World War, with more than half-a-million casualties for a territorial gain of merely eight kilometres. The Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 combines the interactive design of a modern museum with the exceptional aspect of experiencing the Dugouts & Trenches. The museum section provides

an overview of the five battles of Ypres, including the Battle of Passchendaele. Using historical objects, authentic letters, posters and other documents, uniforms of the various armies and video clips etc. both young and old get an insight into how life must have been on and around the battlefields. The interactive elements throughout the entire museum collection ensure that children become acquainted with this piece of history in an interesting way. The tour then continues through the unique Dugout Experience. As a visitor, you discover how the British went to live underground in 1917. An oppressive experience that creates a disconcerting picture of the miserable and claustrophobic

living conditions at that time. The visit concludes at the faithful reconstruction of German and British trenches, along which original shelters have been replicated. Experience the terrifying feeling that befell the soldiers when they were 'imprisoned' here. An intense visit that will only enrich your knowledge of the battle sites in the area.

Chateau grounds: you can completely relax in the chateau grounds, read a book on a bench in the park, stroll hand-in-hand by the lake or take a moment to stop and think about the history of WWI in the 'Poppy gardens', themed gardens dedicated to the various nations that fought in the Battle of Passchendaele.



The museum is highly interactive and appeals to all the senses. Numerous objects from WWI can be touched and visitors can experience safely and first-hand how the various types of gases smell.

LIJSSENTHOEK MILITARY CEMETERY (VISITOR CENTRE AND CEMETERY)

Boescheepseweg 35, 8970 Poperinge \ +32 (0)57 34 66 76
lijssenthoek@poperinge.be

Lijssenthoek was the site of the largest evacuation hospital along the Ypres Salient. Today, Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery bears witness to more than four years of warfare, with the graves of 10,784 soldiers. The Visitor Centre, situated next to the cemetery, offers information on this unique site, including details about the daily life in the hospital and the (re)creation of the cemetery.



At the corner of the car park and the path to the visitors' centre you will find a braille map of the site and another braille map of the visitors' centre inside the building.



TALBOT HOUSE

Gasthuisstraat 43, 8970 Poperinge
+32 (0)57 33 32 28
info@talbothouse.be

The most well-known soldiers' club of the Great War has been renovated. The garden has already received a makeover and various rooms in the house have been restored, including the chapel, kitchen and hall. Besides a museum, Talbot House is still the Every Man's Club it has always been. Visitors can enjoy a cup of tea in the canteen or book a room and spend the night in its guest house!



A tablet application invites the visitor to follow them through the museum, garden and house. Each tour consists of a certain number of hotspots throughout the house, the garden and the museum. Once a tour has been selected the tablet will automatically show the visitor the direction in which he or she should walk. When the destination - in this case the first hotspot - is reached a "story" about that location will start to play. This story can contain video, a voice, a song, an image or even some text.

LAST POST \ MENIN GATE



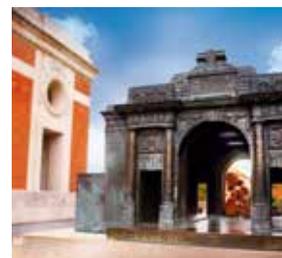
Menenstraat z.n., 8900 Ieper
www.lastpost.be - info@lastpost.be

The Menin Gate is the most famous war memorial for missing persons of the Commonwealth of the First World War in Belgium. The gate, built in a classical style following a design of Sir Reginald Blomfield contains the names of 54,896 missing soldiers of the Commonwealth countries (except New Zealand). The victims of the United

Kingdom who fell after the 16th of August are mentioned by name on the Tyne Cot Memorial. Every evening at 8 pm, a deeply moving ceremony takes place under the vast arch of the Menin Gate: the traffic stops and buglers from the local fire brigade play 'The Last Post'. The ceremony was begun in 1928. Sometimes the ceremony is attended by just few spectators, on more formal occasions hundreds can be present. Irrespective of numbers, the Last Post remains a unique and moving experience.



At the upper exterior level of the Menin Gate, you can touch the scale model, which is an exact replica of the monument. Concerning the Last Post performances, people with a visual impairment are found a special place. Those places have to be reserved, by sending an e-mail to info@lastpost.be (mention the date and the number of persons). Having arrived at the Menin Gate, you can recognize the assistants by the badge they're wearing. Prompt arrival is recommended. Most evenings the Menin Gate is already pretty full by a quarter past seven (the ceremony begins at eight o'clock).



IN FLANDERS FIELDS MUSEUM



Grote Markt 34, 8900 Ieper
+32 (0)57 23 92 20
flandersfields@ieper.be

The In Flanders Fields Museum, renovated in 2012, takes prime place as a must-see attraction in Ypres. A new permanent exhibition focuses on personal stories of ordinary people and establishes a link to the landscape of the First World War in West Flanders. The museum has doubled in size and now hosts a WWI knowledge centre. More than 2,000 original

objects and documents are on display and visitors can follow four personal stories through interactive kiosks. New scenography highlights the most recent museum applications, including touch screens, interactive poppy bracelet, video projection and soundscapes. Everything contributes to a rich experience and submerses visitors in life on the front. In addition, visitors can now climb the bell tower for an extraordinary view of what was once a completely devastated region.



There are special guided tours for visitors with a visual impairment. All of the museum texts are also available in large print and in braille at the desk. At the market place (Grote Markt), in front of the Cloth Hall, you can find a bronze scale model.

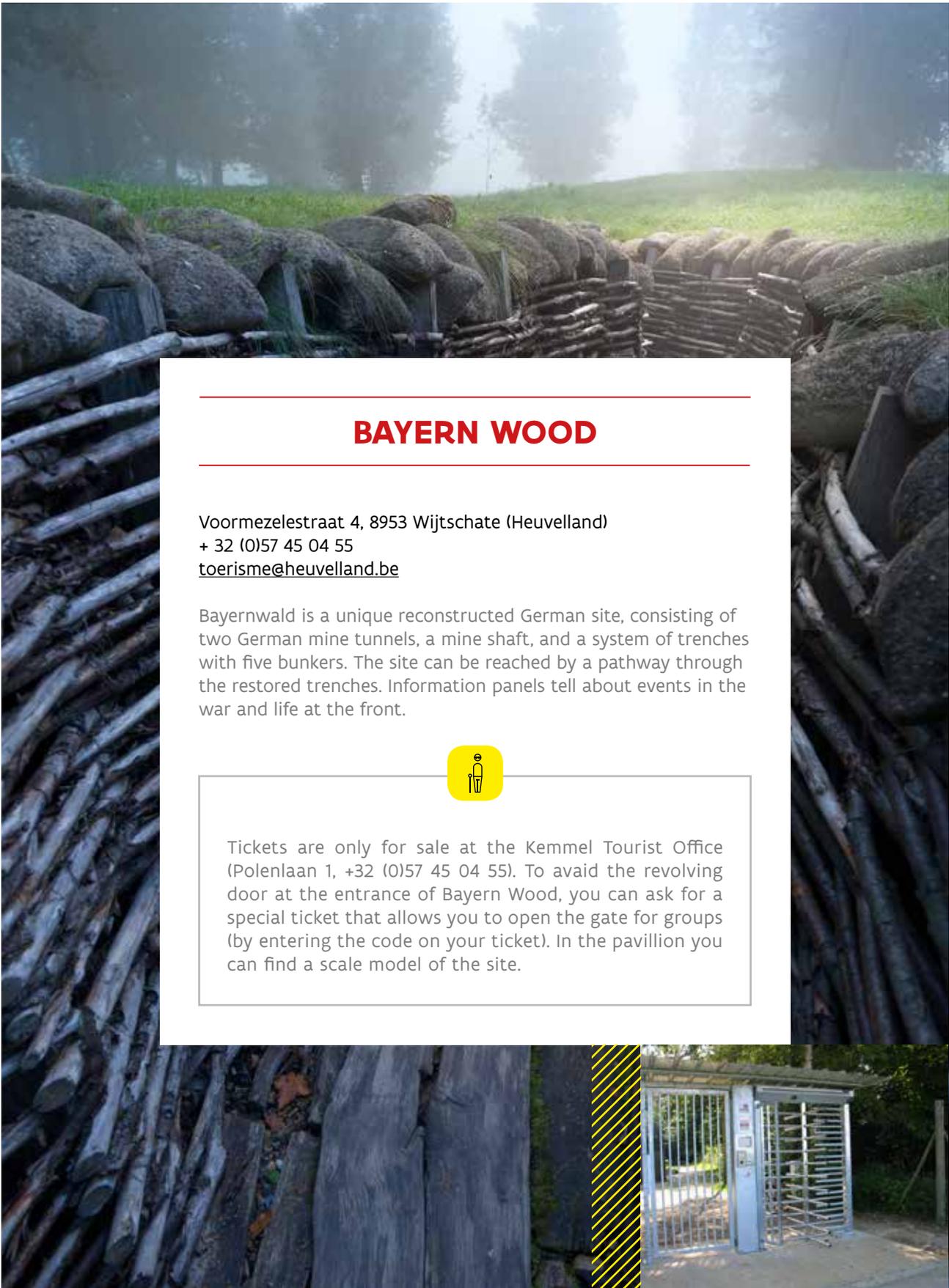
EXHIBITION

TRACES OF WAR: ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR EXHIBITION

FROM 17 FEBRUARY 2018
TO 15 AUGUST 2018
IN FLANDERS FIELDS MUSEUM, YPRES

When the First World War ended, the Westhoek region had been completely destroyed. The original residents returned after the war. Chinese labourers and German prisoners of war cleared most of the traces of destruction: trenches were closed up, bomb craters were filled in, and military infrastructure was dismantled. The farmers returned too and started to work in their fields again. The material evidence became part of the archaeological soil archive. More info: www.inflandersfields.be

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ACCESSIBILITY LEVEL OF THIS EVENT
PIETER.REMMERIE@INTER.VLAANDEREN



BAYERN WOOD

Voormezelestraat 4, 8953 Wijtschate (Heuvelland)
+ 32 (0)57 45 04 55
toerisme@heuvelland.be

Bayernwald is a unique reconstructed German site, consisting of two German mine tunnels, a mine shaft, and a system of trenches with five bunkers. The site can be reached by a pathway through the restored trenches. Information panels tell about events in the war and life at the front.



Tickets are only for sale at the Kemmel Tourist Office (Polenlaan 1, +32 (0)57 45 04 55). To avoid the revolving door at the entrance of Bayern Wood, you can ask for a special ticket that allows you to open the gate for groups (by entering the code on your ticket). In the pavillion you can find a scale model of the site.



MUSEUM AT THE YSER



IJzerdijk 49, 8600 Diksmuide
 +32 (0)51 50 02 86
info@aandeijzer.be

On the occasion of the Great War Centenary, the Museum at the Yser, located in the Yser Tower, has been completely renovated in 2014.. This museum tells the story of the frontlines between Belgium and Germany during the First World War through the stories of soldiers, refugees and citizens on both sides of the front. The museum is not non-committal,

but gives a very clear message: No More War! The museum also looks at the political consequences of this war that led to the Flanders fight for the emancipation. In addition to the overview of the former front at the Yser, you can climb up the 84 meter-high tower and enjoy a stunning panoramic view over Diksmuide and Westhoek.



A general explanation in Braille is available next to the reception, as well as a scale model of the Yser Tower, the Pax Gate and the Crypt, enabling you to feel the tiniest details and a relief map showing the positioning of the three monuments on this site. Both the introduction film of the museum as well as the audio tape in the crypt are available in 4 languages.

OTHER TIPS CLOSEBY



PALINGBEEK PROVINCIAL PARK

Palingbeekstraat, 8902 Ieper
VISITOR CENTRE: Vaartstraat 7, 8902 Zillebeke
+32 (0)57 23 08 40



Extensive area for walking with lots of flora and fauna. The paths are easily accessible. There is an ecological farm where you can participate in activities that are suitable for blind and visually impaired people.



BELLEWAERDE PARK

Meenseweg 497, 8902 Ieper
www.bellewaerde.be

A visit to Bellewaerde is a fun-filled day brimming with adventure and spectacular discoveries for the entire family. With dozens of attractions set in green surroundings, you will experience one adventure after another. The park also features numerous exotic animals.



Disabled persons can make use of several designated parking spaces located near the entrance at car parks A and C. You can park here free of charge on presentation of a disabled persons' parking permit. Disabled persons can report to the information stand at Entrance A or one of the ticket offices at Entrance C for a Guest wristband. It provides faster access to all the attractions, as you don't have to queue and will be accompanied to your designated spot or car. You will find an online brochure containing information and safety regulations for each attraction under the 'Info' tab on the website. This will help you to decide which attractions will or will not be suitable for you.



CUSTOMIZED TRAVEL ADVICE

Where can I find holiday accommodation to meet my needs? Which museums provide a tactile experience or have audio information? Where can I find a restaurant where it will be safe to eat with a gluten allergy? Which travel firms take my special needs into account? Which coach companies have a vehicle with a wheelchair lift?

Flanders wants everyone to get the best welcome: young and old, with or without limitations or care needs, etc. VISITFLANDERS is happy to help you with your holiday or getaway if you have special needs or wishes.

Contact us for free and independent travel advice:
Grasmarkt 61, 1000 Brussels, +32 (0)2 504 03 40
accessible@visitflanders.com
www.visitflanders.com/accessibility

YOU NEED ASSISTANCE ON YOUR HOLIDAY?

You can of course bring your own assistance on your holiday or daytrip. If you decide to travel by yourself, you'll need someone assisting you at your holiday destination. In that case feel free to contact us; we will try and help you find a solution.

Grasmarkt 61, 1000 Brussel
+32 (0)2 504 03 40
accessible@visitflanders.com



TRANSPORT AND PARKING

TRAIN

Belgian Rail provides assistance when boarding or disembarking a train in 131 stations. Find out which stations offer (free) assistance: www.belgianrail.be/en > Customer Service > Passengers with reduced mobility > Stations with assistance.

Assistance must be reserved at least 24 hours in advance. Make your request for assistance via www.belgianrail.be/en > Customer Service > Passengers with reduced mobility > Reserve your assistance or dial +32 (0)2 528 28 28.

You can also download or request the brochure 'Guide for travellers with reduced mobility', also available in Braille or audio CD.

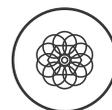
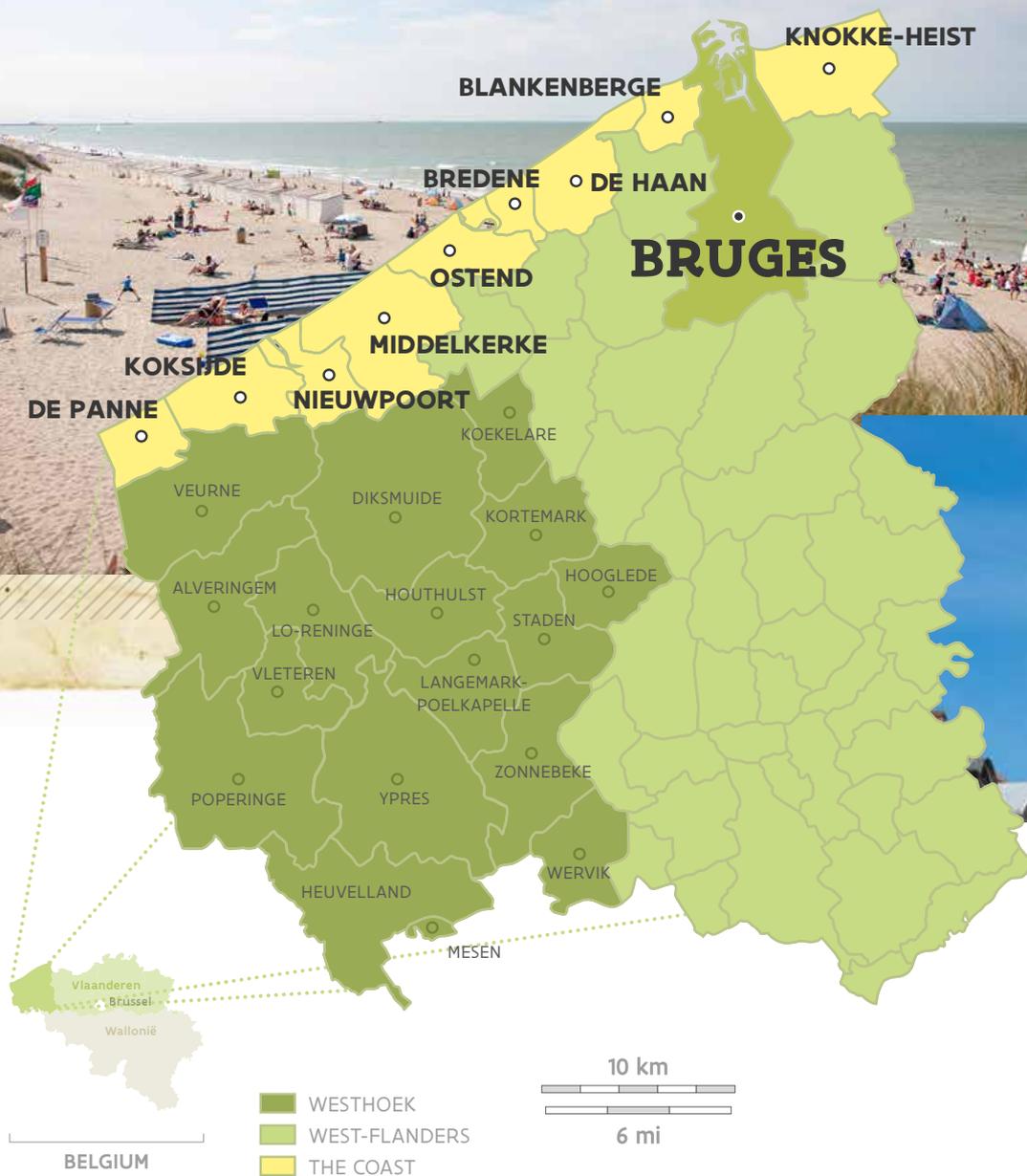
BUS

If you want to learn more about the accessibility policy of the De Lijn company, navigate to www.delijn.be > About De Lijn > Organisation > Responsible enterprise > Accessibility

PARK

Finding a parking place in the Westhoek (or on the coast) is a lot easier using the website www.navigeeren-parkeer.be. This gives you a handy list of the parking spaces reserved for people with a disability. You can zoom in on a map or aerial photo for each municipality until you are right over the parking place. You can even get the dimensions and a photo of each space so that you know whether it is entirely suitable to your needs. This site also gives you detailed instructions on how to locate the reserved parking places on your GPS device. Whoever holds a European parking ticket for people with a disability, can also park in Flanders in parking spots reserved for people with a disability parking sticker. Whether it is possible to park in zones of paid parking for free and/or unlimited differs from municipality to municipality. So it's best to always check the parking meters.

At www.visitflanders.be/accessibility, you can discover practical tips about transport possibilities for blind and visually impaired tourists.



EXTEND YOUR VISIT TO FLANDERS FIELDS WITH A TRIP TO THE FLEMISH COAST OR BRUGES.



RELAXING AT THE FLEMISH COAST

For many local and foreign vacationers our 42 miles (or 67 km) long coastal strip is and remains the holiday destination of choice. The sandy beaches are ideal for children. During high season, life guards ensure everyone's safety. Tourists can enjoy a healthy holiday thanks to the large quantities of salt and iodine in the Flemish sea air. You can also wander along the dike and the boardwalks, rent a bicycle or visit one of the many coastal attractions. And enjoying a nice bite to eat creates the perfect ending to a visit to the coast. However, our ten coastal municipalities do not just offer activities to please everyone's taste but also to suit everyone's needs. Slightly older tourists and holidaymakers with a temporary or permanent disability or people in need of some extra comfort or care while on holiday can also enjoy a holiday at our coast with peace of mind.



Discover the many assets of the Flemish coast in our brochure 'The Flemish coast, accessible for everyone. You can order or download it via www.visitflanders.com/accessibility > Brochures.

BRUGGE, UNESCO WERELDERFGOEDSTAD

Bruges is also located just a stone's throw away from the Westhoek. This Flemish winner has everything for an unforgettable city trip: medieval alleys and canals, world class chocolatiers, ancient Flemish heritage in churches and castles, and of course superb lacework.

More inspiration for an accessible visit to Bruges can be found in our brochure 'Bruges, accessible for all'. The brochure gives you inspiring and accessibility related info on the main tourist attractions of Bruges, but also contains an obstacle-free walk in the old city centre.





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