

Hardy's Cottage Access Statement

Hardy's Cottage
Higher Bockhampton
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 8QJ

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Introduction

1. The cottage is situated 700 yards from the car park and is accessible only by footpath and bridlepath. The cottage is surrounded by a cottage garden and kitchen gardens on a slope, and the cottage is accessed by shallow gravel paths through the flower beds.
2. Mobile reception at the site is poor. In an emergency, it is best to go straight to the kiosk at the entrance, where a member of staff is always stationed and a First Aid kit kept.
3. Assistance dogs are welcome and dogs are allowed on leads into the garden and shed, but not into the cottage.
4. As the house has no overhead lighting or heating, the light levels are low, especially in poor weather. This also means that there is a contrast in light levels when you first enter. The house can be very cold in cold weather. As we constantly have a wood fire burning, it can be slightly smoky in the main room to the left (The Parlour).

Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. Unfortunately, there are no brown signs from the A35. Follow signs to 'Higher Bockhampton/Cuckoo Lane' from the A35, and then follow white fingerposts to 'Hardy's Cottage'.
2. There is a Disabled Parking spot outside of the Visitor Centre (20 yards up a ramp). There is also further Disabled Parking at the cottage (30 yards from the reception), although this needs to be booked by ringing 01305 262366.



3. The surfaces of the Disabled Parking at the Visitor Centre are tarmac with a hogging ramp to the Visitor Centre. The parking for the cottage is Wareham gravel (a clay, gravel and sand mix), with a gravel and sand unmade track leading down to the reception.
4. Unfortunately, there is currently no transfer vehicle.
5. When you ring 01305 262366, we will be able to inform you if all spaces are booked for the cottage. If they are, there is a drop off point in front of the cottage reception kiosk.
6. It is essential that all cottage parking and drop offs are arranged with the cottage prior to your arrival, through ringing 01305 262366 or emailing harriet.still@nationaltrust.org.uk. As the access to the cottage for the drop off and booked parking is along a Bridlepath, it is essential that drivers drive slowly and considerately.
7. The 'Accessible route' to the cottage from the Visitor Centre is an uneven Bridlepath and can become deep sand during dry weather. This is not owned by the National Trust or Dorset County Council, although both make efforts to level/resurface the most worn areas regularly.



WCs

1. There is an accessible toilet at the Visitor Centre.
2. The Accessible WC is 1.55m x 2.16m.
3. The Accessible WC is right-transfer.
4. There is no Changing Places facility.
5. The WCs are well lit with fluorescent bulbs.
6. The WCs all have paper towels and have fluorescent bulbs.

Visitor Centre

1. The building is timber-framed with large glass windows and laminate floors. The roof of the exhibition space has sound absorbing boards build in.
2. The approach to the Visitor Centre from the car park is back along the track leading to the car park. It is a tarmac track leading to a hogging footpath leading up a gradient of 15 degrees to a level forecourt (all laid with Wareham gravel – a clay, sand, gravel mix). There is a disabled parking space at this point where the track meets the footpath leading up to the Visitor Centre.
3. The entrance doors are 1600mm wide.
4. The front doors are power-operated, double doors, and operated by a push button on the left, 5 feet from the door. They open outwards, but not as far as the operating button. Staff and volunteers are based in the shop, just within the doors and can assist, if required.
5. There is no reception desk here.

6. The large windows ensure lots of natural light in the exhibition and café space, although it is a little darker in the gift shop. The gift shop and information panels are lit with fluorescent spotlights. The toilets are lit with fluorescent tubes.
7. There are many chairs available in the café, without arms, and one wicker chair in the window seat, with arms.
8. There is no induction loop available at the Visitor Centre.
9. There is no induction loop available at the till point.
10. We have no regular staff or volunteers with fluency in British Sign Language.
11. We do not currently have any wheelchairs or Trumper buggies available at the site, although there are plans to get Trumper buggies in 2016. Please phone 01305 262366 for details and updates on this project.

Visitor Centre Catering (independent of the National Trust)

1. The counter height is 830mm.
2. Staff will assist as required and may let staff know if they wish to be seated, instead of queuing, to be served at their table.
3. Some of the tables are close together and there is not circulation space between all of them of at least 1200mm.
4. There is an induction loop microphone at the till point.
5. Menus are available in large print, but not in Braille. Please ask the catering staff for large print.
6. There are no double handed mugs or large handled cutlery, but straws are available.

Visitor Centre Retail

1. There is circulation space of 1200mm between the display stands.
2. The till points do not have induction loops.
3. Staff can assist reaching down items to view if they cannot be reached by customers.
4. Staff can assist with telling visitors the price of items.



Cottage Visitor Reception (Kiosk)

1. The Visitor reception at the cottage is a small kiosk, sat in by a member of staff or volunteer.



2. There is an incline of 10 degrees up to the entrance gate, however the area from the front gate to the kiosk is level. The path is fine gravel.
3. The reception desk is 930 mm high. There are clipboards available for people to use if they cannot reach the desk. There is also a small amount of retail inside the kiosk. Staff can pass customers merchandise from inside the kiosk, to look at, and inform them of prices. The card reader is cordless and can be passed to the customer.
4. The visitor is standing outside as they address the member of staff or volunteer within the kiosk. Here, there is natural light. The inside of the kiosk is lit by a fluorescent light.
5. There are chairs behind the kiosk, for those waiting for a drop-off/pick-up. These are also used for those wishing to join the National Trust to sit at, while completing forms.



6. There are no induction loops available for the cottage of the membership recruitment desk.
7. We do not have any volunteers or staff who are fluent in British Sign Language, although we do have a Braille guide at the kiosk, which can be borrowed on request.
8. We do not currently have any wheelchairs available at the cottage.

House

1. The car park and Visitor Centre are 600 yards from the cottage. The main bridlepath linking the two is an unmade private road. This is made of gravel and sand and is rutted. The sand can become deep in dry weather. The cottage disabled parking (must be booked in advance) is 30 yards from the front gate, or disabled visitors can be dropped at the front gate as they pass.
2. The paths from the Visitor Entrance are Wareham gravel (a sand, gravel, clay mix). The path can become covered in leaves and mud in places in wet weather and autumn.
3. The entrance to the cottage is a central door. The doorframe is relatively low. There is no cill, step or lip to the door.
4. The entrance door is manual and inward-opening, but left open.



5. The entrance door is 76cm wide.
6. All main rooms lack soft furnishings, apart from the beds. The floors are stone-flagged and brick-laid downstairs, and wooden floorboards upstairs. The ceilings are all low, and so there is not excessive echoing.
7. The rooms are all lit with natural light. However, the windows are small and the rooms become dark in bad weather and winter. There are some artificial lights on the stairs, in the bread oven and in a corner of the parlour.
8. The first floor is accessed by 10 steep stairs with a hand rail. The height of the hand rail is 90cm and the steps are 22cm deep and 22cm high. There is a folder of images of upstairs, on request, for those who do not or cannot climb them. The second stairs down from the first floor (optional) are for those coming down only and are a Dutch stairs (ladder) with handrail. For those choosing to come down these, they must be attempted backwards.

9. There are two narrow doors on the first floor. The door from the Parents' Bedroom to Hardy's Bedroom is 60cm wide and the door into the Sisters' Bedroom is 72cm wide.



10. There is space to turn a wheelchair easily only in the Parlour and in Granny's Kitchen.
11. All rooms have seats that may be used by all visitors. There are chairs with arms in the Parlour and the Parents' Room.
12. There is always a volunteer in the Parlour, and then a second at the bottom of the stairs or in Granny's Kitchen (dependent on visitor numbers).
13. There is a single Staff WC in the cottage, which may be used in emergencies on request.
14. There are no formal tours.
15. There is a Braille guide which contains the information found in the Cottage Handbooks.
16. There are no restrictions on access for powered wheelchairs or powered mobility vehicles inside the House but the rooms are very small.
17. There are no designated quiet areas. In the summer, the house is usually very busy and noisy. However, in March, May, June and October there tend to be quiet places around the house. These are subject to visitor numbers and movement. There are chairs and tables at the bottom of the garden and a garden shed, which tend to be quieter when we are open.
18. There is no catering at the cottage.

Garden

1. The garden in a typical cottage garden with shallow gravel paths through the flower beds in the central garden and grass lawns and paths bordering the vegetable garden. The orchard is accessed separately to the property and has mown grass paths around the trees, with a Wareham gravel path leading from the lane gate to the woodland gate. There is a sharp incline on the path up to the woods. There are bee hives in the orchard, behind a paling fence.
2. There is a main gravel path which leads from the kiosk, to the right of the flower beds and up to the front of the house. This remains wide even in summer with the growth of plants either side.



3. The paths between the flowerbeds are all shallow gravel. The paths around the flower beds are mown grass. There is a brick path up to the shed (with no handrail), which can become slippery when wet or icy.
4. There are 10 degree gradients on the paths leading up from the reception kiosk through the garden to the house.
5. There are no steps in the garden.
6. There are gates into and out of the orchard and garden. These are left open during opening hours.
7. There is no interpretation in the garden.
8. There are chairs and tables at the bottom of the garden. There are backless benches in the flower garden, next to the shed and in the orchard overlooking the house.
9. There are currently no water features, although there are plans to get a working hand-pump by 2016.

Shed

1. The shed is accessed by laid-brick paths from the main garden. It is 20m from the Cottage.



2. The door is left open during opening times.
3. The shed floor is 8cm above the outside ground level.
4. The door width is 94cm
5. There are no soft furnishings, but there is little echo.
6. There is minimal natural lighting from a small window and the open door. The room is lit by a single fluorescent tube. The room is quite dark.
7. There space to turn a wheelchair easily inside the shed.
8. There are chairs, without arms, for visitors to sit on.
9. There are currently no regular volunteers in the shed.
10. The written information for the shed is available in the Braille guide, available from the kiosk.



Contact details for more information

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Date **28/03/16**