

Prior Park Landscape Garden Access Statement



Perched on a hillside overlooking Bath, this elevated spot was chosen by Ralph Allen to show off his estate to the city. The magical landscape garden he created captures a moment in time: 1764, the year of Allen's death. There is a lot to discover from winding paths to the views over Bath, you can even walk over the Palladian Bridge, one of only four in the world. A tea garden provides a picturesque refreshment stop at the bottom of the garden by the lakes.

Contact details

Prior Park Landscape Garden
Ralph Allen Drive
Bath
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Introduction

- Prior Park is on a steep hill, and thus there are steep slopes and uneven surfaces throughout the garden. There is one set of steps in the garden which are uneven.
- Mobile phone signal is good in the garden, please call 999 in an emergency and alert visitor reception on 01225 833422.
- All dogs are welcome on leads. There are dog water bowls at the toilets by reception and by the tea shed.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

- There are brown pedestrian signs guiding visitors to the garden in the immediate area. The main entrance is obvious on Ralph Allen Drive where there is disabled parking only available.
- There are 5 disabled parking spaces (upper parking) at our main visitor reception and 3 available at the lower staff entrance. The upper parking is 10-20 feet from reception.
- The car park is lightly gravelled hardstanding.
- Wheelchair access is not possible between the two car parks but visitors are welcome to enjoy the accessible areas at the top of the garden then drive down to park and enjoy the lake, bridge and tea shed.
- Cycle racks are available by the main reception.
- Coach drop off is outside visitor reception in the layby.

WCs

- There are accessible toilets at the main visitor reception and by the tea shed at the lower end of the garden.
- The upper toilet measures 197cm x 142cm and the door is 82 cm wide approx. The lower toilet is 243cm wide x 150cm and the door is 66cm wide.
- The toilet by reception has left hand transfer rails and the lower toilet by the tea shed has right hand rails. There are no adult changing facilities but baby changing facilities are available in both.
- Both WCs are lit with natural light and artificial lighting.
- Both WCs have automatic hand driers and vinyl flooring. The upper WC is accessible by a short ramp and the lower WC is at ground level.

Visitor Reception



- Visitor reception is based outdoors, with a small covered walkway. It is 10 – 20 feet from the disabled parking.
 - The entrance is flat with the same lightly gravelled hardstanding as the car park.
 - There is a small window for staff to speak to visitors, with a lower table off to one side which can be used for admission and membership enquiries. Staff are happy to come out of the reception building to talk to visitors and part of the welcome is outside.
 - The area is outdoors so uses natural lighting.
- There are two small garden chairs available to sit on.
 - There is an induction loop.

Catering

- The Tea Shed is next to the disabled parking at the lower end of the garden. There are 3 wooden steps up to the building but visitors are welcome to access it around the back and staff are happy to leave the tea shed to greet visitors.
- The surface is hard core in the car park and compressed stone chipping in the tea garden.
- The counter is 940mm in height, however visitors should alert staff should they have any accessibility needs and they will be happy to assist where possible.
- The tea shed and seating area are all outdoors with the only covered area being a small (4x6') space in front of the tea shed which is up 3 steps.
- We offer picnic bench style tables which are well spread out.
- Menus are available in standard and large print on request.
- Straws are available from the tea shed

Retail

- Our retail area is small and within the reception area. It consists of a few shelves and a boat bookshop. They are both outdoors.
- The reception till has an induction loop.
- Staff will assist where possible in bringing items down and informing of prices.

Garden

- Our welcome leaflet marks out the accessible and less accessible areas on the map and reception staff are well briefed to let visitors know where they may encounter more difficult areas.
- The path surfaces are compacted stone chipping.
- The garden has some steep slopes and uneven surfaces and reception staff will be able to guide visitors as to the best areas to enjoy the garden from.



- The steepest gradient in the garden is 25% which is not recommended for mobility scooters or wheelchairs.



- The bridge has 7 steps up to it, one side is accessible from the path.

- There are 2 sets of steps within the garden which are clearly marked on the welcome leaflet.



- The steps have handrails all the way up and there are handrails through the steeper sections of the garden.
- There are kissing gates to enter the pasture which is a large grassy field area.
- There are interpretation boards in the garden which are printed with large text and are at wheelchair height.
- There are benches throughout the garden.
- There are several water features in the garden, including a cascade, serpentine lake, and three larger lakes with our Palladian bridge over it. There is also a small stream.

Contact details for more information

T: 01225 833977

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09/06/15

Map

Expect the unexpected

Prior Park is unlike many other gardens, as there are few flowers and no formal beds. Instead you'll find:

- winding paths leading to hidden retreats
- stunning viewpoints over the city
- a Grotto, Summerhouse and site of a ruined Gothic Temple
- cascades and tranquil lakes
- the elegant Palladian Bridge

Ralph Allen's rise to riches

Ralph Allen rose from a humble background to become one of the wealthiest men in the country. He made his first fortune by reorganising the postal system.

Allen then invested in the stone quarries at nearby Combe Down. He used the stone to build Prior Park as a dramatic 'show house'. Many of the prominent buildings in Bath were then constructed from the honey-coloured stone.

We hope you enjoy your visit.
Matthew Ward, Head Gardener

Key

- | | | | |
|----|--|-----|---|
| 1 | Visitor reception/Boat shop | --- | Footpath, suitable for wheelchair users |
| 2 | Grotto | ∨ | Steep hill |
| 3 | Site of Gothic Temple | ∧ | Viewpoint |
| 4 | The Cabinet | | |
| 5 | Cascade | | |
| 6 | Serpentine Lake | | |
| 7 | Sham Bridge | | |
| 8 | Summerhouse | | |
| 9 | Fishponds Cottage (private) | | |
| 10 | Exit gate | | |
| 11 | Natural play area | | |
| 12 | Lower Dam | | |
| 13 | Ice House and site of Thatched Cottage | | |
| 14 | Palladian Bridge | | |
| 15 | Horseshoe Walk | | |
| 16 | Rock Gate (no exit) | | |
| ♣ | Lavatories/baby changing | | |
| ☕ | The Tea Shed | | |

Prior Park Mansion (private school)

Described in 1788, as 'a noble seat which sees all of Bath and which was built for all of Bath to see'



To bus stop on Ralph Allen Drive (10 mins walk)

To Bath city centre (20 mins walk)

In case of emergencies please contact us on 01225 833 422
If you'd like this information in an alternative format,
please call us on 01225 833 977
or email priorpark@nationaltrust.org.uk