

## **Smallhythe Place Access Statement**

Smallhythe Road  
Smallhythe  
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### **Introduction**

1. Mobile reception across the property can be poor to good.
2. The property is not on completely level ground, there are slopes but no hills.
3. Dogs on leads are permitted within the garden but not any of the buildings. We provide a bowl and access to water next to our tearoom. We ask that all dog waste is taken away with you as we do not have suitable bins.
4. Light levels in the house vary according to seasons; light is controlled to protect the collection.
5. We have a portable wheelchair ramp for access to the ground floor of the house and into the tearoom indoor seating.
6. There are no power assisted doors.
7. The garden has 2 ponds; both have warning signs next to them. The upper pond has a low wall which gives way to a 30cm drop into the water. The lower pond has no fencing with a slope leading to the water.
8. We do not currently have induction loops.

### **Arrival & Parking Facilities**

1. Car parking is in a layby just south of the house, there is also space in a layby opposite and availability on most days in the local church car park which is a few hundred yards back up the hill from the main house. There is access to the garden from the back of the church via a gate to avoid having to walk down the road to the house.
2. The main layby is hard standing with painted lines to indicate direction of parking. The opposite layby is a grass/earth surface. The church is hard standing.
3. Blue badge holders are welcome to drop off at the main gate to the property but there are no allocated spaces as the main layby is administered by the borough council.
4. Coaches can drop off at the main gate to the house. Parking can be either at the Chapel Down Vineyard just back up the hill (prior agreement needed) or at the Tenterden coach park (approx 2 miles away). There will not be space for a coach to park in the layby.

### **WCs**

1. There are 2 toilets next to the tearoom at the back of the barn theatre.
2. Both toilets have assistance rails but are not accessible to wheelchair users.
3. Both are artificially lit although one does have natural light via a window.

## Visitor Reception

1. Reception is in the main house within what was the dining room/kitchen. There are 2 steps into the house and a further small step down into the dining room. Floors within the house are stone or wood. A wheelchair ramp is available for access into the main house.
2. The main entrance door is wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair and is kept wide open during our visiting hours.
3. The reception desk can be accessed via a small pull out section with facility to write if required. A chair can be made available if required.
4. There is a combination of artificial and natural light.
5. There is a settle within the dining room which visitors can use.
6. There is no induction loop at the desk.

## House

1. Stone covered path from the car park to the main gate where it changes to a brick surface.
2. Steps into the main entrance of the house, a ramp is available for wheelchairs on request.
3. Main door is always open and wide enough to accommodate most sizes of wheelchairs. The hallway is accessible to reach the front desk for tickets, a small step down of approx 1.5 inches.
4. All rooms within the house are either bare floorboards or stone with rugs in some rooms.
5. Natural light in the house is fairly poor, lighting achieved by a variety of lamps and ceiling lights (no fluorescent strips).
6. The house has a 1<sup>st</sup> floor which is not accessible by wheelchair. There are 2 staircases, the second being easier to ascend due to the narrow and steep 1<sup>st</sup> staircase. Access on request.
7. Narrow corridor section at top of main staircase to 1<sup>st</sup> floor.
8. A wheelchair user will be able to navigate and turn within the two rooms downstairs. Displays are positioned to allow access.
9. The dining room downstairs has a settle for people to use, there is also a wooden bench just inside the main entrance door.
10. The dining room is occupied by a Visitor Services Assistant, volunteer room stewards are in the sitting room downstairs and the bedroom upstairs.
11. There are no toilet facilities within the main house, these are within the barn buildings.
12. Volunteers provide free historic garden tours on some days, these are not supported in terms of braille or hearing induction.
13. There is an ipad available with pictures of the upstairs of the house for those unable to climb the stairs.
14. Powered vehicles can sometimes access depending on their size, please contact the property to check.

## **Catering**

1. The theatre tearoom is accessible by wheelchair users, a portable ramp is available at the house and staff will provide that on request.
2. The counter has an additional lower section for wheelchair users, the tearoom staff will also carry trays to tables where required.
3. Staff are always available to assist wherever needed
4. Tables are accessible to wheelchair users both inside the tearoom and outside on the picnic tables.
5. There is not an induction loop in the tearoom.
6. Menus are on blackboards and staff will always go through options with all customers.

## **Retail**

1. The retail display is within the theatre tearoom and consists of a small display of items.
2. Staff are available to assist with higher items if required and assist with providing prices.

## **Garden**

1. The main garden surfaces are predominantly grass with some occasional stone inlay and all accessible by wheelchair. Slopes are minimal and a map is provided to show the most appropriate routes.
2. The rose garden is enclosed and not accessible by wheelchair due to the narrowness of the grass paths. This area can be viewed to some degree from the gate and additional photographs are available on request.
3. There are oak signs at places of importance within the garden; there are also exhibitions within the cow byre (accessible) and the hut at the top of the garden (not accessible).
4. There are some benches within the garden.
5. There are two ponds in the garden both with warning signs of deep water. Both can be viewed safely.

## **Contact details for more information**

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### **Date**

21<sup>st</sup> February 2017