

This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with access needs, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer all our guests/visitors.

Access Statement for Houghton Lodge Gardens



Houghton Lodge
Gardens

Introduction

Built in 1790, Houghton Lodge is one of the few surviving examples of a Cottage Ornee, overlooking the tranquil waters of the river Test, and surrounded by beautiful informal gardens, parkland, water meadows and a quintessential walled garden containing a herb garden, fruit cage, wild flower borders, rose arches, apple arbour and an Orchid House. You can also enjoy a Tearoom, Art Exhibition and a shop selling a limited range of gifts. These are situated on the ground floor in the newly renovated Tearoom and Orangery with step free access.

Situated in the heart of the Test Valley countryside, 5 minutes from the local town of Stockbridge. 20 minutes from Winchester, Andover, Romsey and 30 minutes from Salisbury. You should allow approx 1 hour to visit the gardens. The house is only open by appointment.

The house is set on a steep hill on the east side, with grass paths and lawns in the garden, and gravel paths in the walled garden. There is a gradual approach to the west elevation of the house. The topography of the site means that it is generally accessible however it is regrettably not suitable for wheelchairs and mobility scooters.



Houghton Lodge Gardens is a member of the Visit England Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone 01264 810502 or email sophie@houghtonlodge.co.uk.

Pre-Arrival

- For full details and maps of how to reach us please see the Visitor Information page on our website www.houghtonlodge.co.uk.
- The nearest railway station is Winchester or Andover which is 15 miles away. Taxis are available at the station. If you require an accessible taxi you can book this in advance; Andover Pikes Taxis 01264 334328 and Winchester Wintax 01962 878727
- The nearest bus stop is at the end of our drive-it is a request stop only
- There is a free community transport bus from Romsey, direct to the car park at Houghton Lodge. For details ring 0330 4004 116
- We have an access statement on our website on our Visitor information page.

Car Parking and Arrival

- There is a large grass covered car park a few minutes walk away from the entrance to the Tearooms that can take 200 cars with additional parking close to the entry for anyone who may have difficulty with access. Cars may park on each side of the gravel drive. The car park is on a slope.
- The sloping gravel road becomes a sloping uneven concrete road that passes next to the Tearoom and enters a tarmac courtyard housing the toilets.
- Cars are welcome to drop off outside the Tearoom and then go and park in the car park. There is ramp access to the Tearoom, with a handrail on the right hand side.
- Car parking is free.



Main Entrance, Reception and Ticketing Area

- The main entrance is in the Tearooms. The area is situated on the ground floor with step free, level access throughout.
- The payment area is over a stainless steel workbench. Please pay the tea house staff for entry to the gardens.
- The floor surface is tiled.
- The area is evenly and well lit, with overhead lighting from spot lights.
- Access to the tearooms, Orangery and patio is step free.
- A pad, paper and magnifying glass are available at the counter.



Attraction (displays, exhibits, rides etc.)

- There are information boards in the teahouse. We are currently renewing these boards and hope that they will soon be available in large print. We hope that some will be in braille.
- There is ample inside seating in the Tearoom and Orangery and there is some seating on the patio under umbrellas.
- There is some low soft seating in the Tearoom next to the wood burning stove.
- The Art Exhibition is in the Orangery.
- There is a small selection of giftware on open shelves in the Orangery, and plants for sale on the patio. All at 28"/70cm high.

- There is no background music or flashing lights.



Public Toilets

- Public toilets are situated in the yard adjacent to the tearooms and opposite the dove house. There is access through the yard, which is on a slight slope.
- These toilets have a unisex accessible toilet, with a sliding lock.
- There is ramp access to the toilets.
- The toilets are all at ground level.
- The door is 30"/77cm wide. There is a 25"/64cm clear space for a wheelchair on the left of the toilet.
- The toilet height is 19"/49cm.
- There is a horizontal grab rail on each side of the toilet, and a vertical grab rail on each side of the sink.



- There is a red alarm cord on the left of the toilet which sounds an alarm.
- There is good even lighting from an overhead downlighter and natural light from a small window.
- The floor is non slip concrete.
- There are lever taps on the sink.
- There is colour contrast with critical surfaces-the walls are soft green and toilet and washbasin white.

Catering

- The tearoom is situated on the ground floor. There is a ramp accessing the path leading to the front door, with step free level access throughout the Tearoom, Orangery and Patio.



- The door to the Tearooms is a light outward opening door, which is nearly always open. The door is 40"/102 cm wide.

- The outward opening door on to the patio from the Tearoom is 31"/79 cm wide.
- There are tables and chairs in the Tearoom which can make access difficult however the staff will open the adjacent walled garden gate to allow through mobile scooters and wide wheelchairs.
- Tables in the Tearoom and Orangery are well spaced apart.
- The tables are 28"/72cm high with a central stand. The wooden chairs are all upright and made of wood, without arms.
- Lighting in all areas is natural daylight with overhead downlights.
- The flooring in the Tearoom is tile.
- Where possible, all our food is locally sourced. We do our best to cater for any dietary requirements. Please contact us in advance to check any specific requests you may have.
- Orders are placed at the Tearoom counter and your order will be brought to your table.
- Specials of the day are shown on a blackboard.
- Staff can read out the menu on request.
- The crockery is blue and contrasts with the brown wood table tops. The plates are blue and white. The rest of the crockery is patterned.
- The nearest toilet is situated outside the Tearoom, 50 yards to the left.

Shop(s)

- There is a shop with a limited range of 'giftware', cards and prints. Paintings can be bought from the Art Exhibition. Plants are for sale on the patio. The shop and Art Exhibition are situated in the Orangery which can be accessed directly from the main Tearoom.
- There is a ramp for leaving the patio and entering the walled garden.

- There is a 6'/180cm door into the shop from the Tearoom which is open.
- The shop and Art Exhibition are level throughout.
- The floor is made of tile.
- There is ample room between the tables in the Orangery for a wheelchair, mobility scooter and pushchair.
- The giftware is displayed on a table which is located from a seated position, and there is an upright open cupboard, and open self display units.
- There is no background music.
- Staff can give assistance.



Grounds and Gardens

- There is a large 14 acre garden which consists of a beautiful walled garden with fruit trees, fruit cage, orchid house, herbaceous borders and wildflower meadow. Beyond the walled garden there is a long herbaceous border, a formal topiary garden, a snorting puffing dragon, a woodland walk, parkland, water meadows and 4 alpacas, Tom, Dick, Harry and Herbert.
- Picnics are only allowed in the carpark.
- There is a ramp for exiting the patio and entering the walled garden, and for exiting the walled garden in the arched gate at the end of the Well border. There are steps on the east gate of the walled garden.

- The walled garden gate is 43"/110cm wide.
- There are gravel paths in the walled garden and grass paths in the garden.
- The pathways are 36"/90cm - 55"/140cm wide.



- The lawns and pathways can be uneven and unlevel underfoot.
- There are steps in the peacock garden but a gravel path at the top of this garden allows access through it.
- There is a slope at the entrance and at the exit from the woodland walk.
- The walled garden and lawns are on a hill. The house is on the steepest incline, with a long hill leading to a flat lawn next to the river.
- There are narrow bridges. There is a road bridge to access the alpacas and water meadow trail, which allows the narrower bridges to be avoided.



- Access through the alpaca and water meadows is over a field which is both uneven and unlevel. The gate into the Alpaca field is 46"/117cm wide.
- There is access through the alpaca field. Alpacas are timid creatures and will not hurt you. All dogs including assistance dogs are allowed in the alpaca field.
- There are wooden benches placed at intervals round the gardens.



Additional Information

- We have a set of evacuation procedures. There are visible signs in the Tearoom and Orangery. The fire assembly point is in the car park.
- We welcome trained assistance dogs. A water bowl and biscuits are available in the Tearoom and on the patio.
- We welcome all dogs in the garden on a short lead, and provided all deposits are taken home with you. There are dog poo bags available on request.
- There is some minimal low level signage (white wording and pictograms on green) however, as this is a family garden we would like to keep signage to a minimum.



- There is accommodation available in the local town of Stockbridge, and details of their access statements, for information where available.

Future Plans

- We have applied for planning permission to improve signage outside the property (July 2016).
- We hope to replace the concrete floor in the toilets with a nonslip laminate from 2017.

- We aim to improve the signage round the garden from 2017.
- We aim to improve the quality of information round the garden from 2017.
- We aim to improve our garden leaflet and map from 2017.
- We are planning a review of our website next year to make it more accessible, your comments are welcome to assist us with this project.
- Our website will feature a virtual tour of the gardens from this winter, compiled through drone and video photography.

Contact Information

Address (Inc postcode): Houghton Lodge Gardens Stockbridge
Hampshire SO20 6LQ

Telephone: 01264 810502

Email: sophie@houghtonlodge.co.uk

Website: www.houghtonlodge.co.uk

Grid Reference: SU3433 3334

Hours Of Operation: 10-5.00pm daily 1st April-30th September

Local Accessible Taxi: Andover Pikes 01264 334328; Winchester
Wintax- 01962 878727

Local Public Transport: All buses go from Andover direct to Winchester but then that bus goes to Houghton Lodge. The bus is a number 16 and it leaves the Broadway Winchester (where there is the large bronze statue to King Alfred) at 10.00am and 13.20pm There is no return bus after 4.00pm other than on school days.