

Birmingham Back to Backs Access Statement

Birmingham Back to Backs
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Introduction

1. Birmingham Back to Backs are located on a busy street in Birmingham city centre, next to the Hippodrome Theatre. The Back to Backs are a series of small Grade II* Listed houses built back to back with a single dividing wall between them, and they enclose a walled courtyard which is accessed via a level alleyway from Inge Street. They are three-storey buildings with a small, furnished room on each floor and steep, winding staircases between each floor. Space is very limited and it can be quite dark inside. With the exception of George Saunders's tailor shop, objects are suitable for handling.
2. Mobile phone reception is good across the site. Visitors are always accompanied by a guide who will welcome them and provide a narrative as they tour the property.
3. There is a level-access toilet with handrails situated within the yard.
4. There is a hearing induction loop available in reception.
5. Light levels can be low around the property. Genuine fires, candles and paraffin lamps are lit to evoke an appropriate atmosphere.
6. Assistance dogs are welcome.
7. Due to confined spaces and narrow staircases, large bags are not permitted on property and we cannot store them.
8. Visits are by guided tour only – please contact the booking team or national trust website.
9. Ground floor tours are available, and these are enhanced with visuals of the upper floors.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. Birmingham Back to Backs are located on the corner of Hurst Street and Inge Street, next to the Birmingham Hippodrome Theatre. There are a limited number of directional brown signs in the general locality.
2. There are 2 publicly accessible parking spaces outside the property, on Hurst Street, which are directly outside of the bookshop.
3. Level access is available from the street into the main museum via an alleyway on Inge Street (picture right). The measurements of this alleyway are 2500mm x 940mm.
4. The roads and pathways approaching the Back to Backs are tarmac surfaces. The accessible parking spaces are also on a tarmac road surface.
5. If accessible parking is not available, it is possible to drop visitors off outside the property and find parking. The nearest car park is at the Arcadian, but parking is also available nearby on Bromsgrove Street or Pershore Street. There is no National Trust parking available onsite.
6. New Street Station is 460 metres away from the Back to Backs.



WCs

1. There is a level access toilet with left hand transfer and railings in the yard, opposite the alleyway entrance from Inge Street.
2. The accessible toilet measures 2.25m x 1.6m
3. Baby changing facilities are available here.
4. All the WCs have automatic hand driers, tile floors, and brick wall surfaces.
5. All the WCs have artificial lighting with no natural light once the door is closed.
6. The doorway for the accessible toilet is 1830mm x 940mm (picture right). The entry is level access, with the door opening outwards and having a turn lock.
7. The sink height is 750mm.



Visitor Reception

1. The visitors' reception has a wooden floor throughout. There are not many soft furnishings in the space and the sound can be amplified in here.
2. There is level access to visitor reception from the public pathway in Hurst Street. There is one manually operated door that leads into the reception from Hurst Street. This door is 700mm wide and opens inwards (picture right). The door has a level threshold. Staff are available to assist with opening the doors if required.
3. The reception desk is 900mm high. Staff can move freely from behind the desk to talk to customers as the need arises.
4. There are large windows allowing natural light into the reception area, which is also lit with LED lamp bulbs.
5. There is a hearing induction loop available at the reception desk.



House

1. The Backs to Backs is a small site made up of several small buildings surrounding an inner yard. The entrances to the show houses are on the same side of the yard as the level entrance via the alleyway, and only a short distance across from reception.
2. The pavements on the exterior of the property are tarmac surfaces. The yard is paved and is uneven in places.
3. Entrances into the show houses are level. The doors are manually operated but are usually opened by tour guides.
4. The doorway to House 1 is 760mm wide and opens inwards. The doorway to House 2 is 720mm wide and opens inwards. The doorway to House 3 is 750mm wide and opens inwards (picture right top). House 4 is more easily accessed from the street. The doorway to House 4 is 760mm wide and opens inwards. (Picture right bottom).
5. The rooms are small and well-furnished, and so are not conducive to echoes. However, there are sound points in some of the rooms. Some of these provide background music and sounds. Please let us know if we can arrange a quiet tour for you.



6. House 1 is lit by candlelight. House 2 is lit by paraffin lamps. Houses 3 and 4 are lit by LED lighting. There is limited natural light, as windows are only on one side of the houses.
7. The houses are on three storeys. Access to the first and second floors is via steep winding staircases only, due to the nature of the building. A full tour incorporates eight of these staircases, all of which have handrails. Most of these staircases are enclosed. Ground floor tours are available.
8. Above ground floor the access is restricted by stairs that narrow down to 800mm width and doorways of 600mm width leading into rooms.
9. The rooms are very small and filled with furniture. There is not adequate space to turn a wheelchair because of this.
10. There are many seats around the houses which can be used. On the ground floor of properties 1, 2 and 3 some seats have armrests.
11. There is access to other rooms off the main courtyard, the door is 860mm wide and has level access (picture right).
12. All visits to the Back to Backs are guided. On the day of your visit your guide will be able to assist with any access requirements you may have.
13. There are no WCs in the houses, but there is a level access WC opposite the houses in the courtyard.
14. The houses are not suitable inside for access for powered wheelchairs or powered mobility vehicles.
15. Should visitors not wish to complete the tour with their group, arrangements can be made to provide a place to sit elsewhere onsite.



Catering

1. There is no catering facility at the Back to Backs. We are located within close proximity to bars and cafes and a small Tesco store.

Retail

1. The Backs to Backs has a second-hand bookshop accessible from Hurst Street.
2. The pavements on the exterior of the property are tarmac surfaces.
3. The entrance to the bookshop is level. The entry door is manually operated, 750mm wide and opens inwards.
4. The room is large, with a counter, and lots of shelves, and so is not conducive to echoes.
5. The counter is 840mm high.
6. The room is lit by natural lighting from the display windows and overhead LED lights.
7. Staff are always happy to bring down items to view, as these should not be reached for by customers.
8. Staff are able to provide relevant information and prices to visitors verbally.





Garden

1. There is no garden at the Back to Backs.

Contact details for more information

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