



Quarry Bank Access Statement

One of Britain's greatest industrial heritage sites, showing how a complete community lived and worked.

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The National Trust recognises the need to provide equally for different visitors, and the benefits of a diversity of employees and volunteers, to ensure that we continue to achieve our core purpose of *For Ever, For Everyone*. Here at Quarry Bank we are committed to developing and promoting access in the widest sense to our property, and services for all sections of society.

We want to see the broadest possible public access to the historic environment at Quarry Bank, both inside the mill and other buildings on the site, and outside in our gardens and wider estate, whilst ensuring we fulfil our obligation to conserve this unique place. We also want as many people as possible to be able to access the interpretation that makes these spaces come alive, especially when physical access to some elements of the site is difficult or impossible. To help achieve this aim, we created the Quarry Bank Access Group, which includes representatives from local disabled and access groups.

All our staff and volunteers are committed to realising these goals, participating in any necessary training and remaining ready to assist to achieve the highest possible levels of access for all members of society, consistent with our duty to conserve the historic site. We are committed to continuous improvement and will welcome any comments or suggestions for improvement that you may have.

Introduction

Quarry Bank is an industrial heritage site with a mill; apprentice house and associated garden growing historic varieties; workers' cottages; picturesque gardens; kitchen garden and historic glasshouse; an historic weir and a modern water turbine-generator, fish and eel passes; and woodland. The mill was built here because the River Bollin has cut a steep-sided gorge with a rapid fall in river level. This gives the opportunity to extract significant power from the water – but also means that paths between the top and bottom of the site are, of necessity, steep.

General

- We have braille and large print guides of Quarry Bank available located at the Visitor Welcome Building, as well as printed accessibility guides.
- We have a large tactile map4all positioned at the orientation point at the welcome building.

Accessibility Guide

- Assistance dogs are welcome in all buildings. All dogs are to be kept on a lead in the mill yard, Mill Meadow and gardens. Non-assistance dogs are not permitted to enter any buildings, but we provide areas with water bowls which are refilled regularly or can be filled on request.
- There is a buggy service which offers transfers between the car park, Visitor Reception, Quarry Bank House, the mill yard (for access to the Mill, the shop and toilets), the Apprentice House, the garden and Styal Village (for access to the village hub and the Worker's Cottage). Please ask for the buggy at these locations. The buggy is suitable for those able to transfer themselves from wheelchair to buggy. The buggy can carry a wheelchair if it can be folded.
- A powered mobility vehicle (Tramper) is available to borrow. It may be used only in the garden areas shown on the map provided to users on arrival (further details under Gardens below). The Tramper can be booked for two-hour sessions which can be extended if there are no bookings following that session. Please book this in advance by calling 01625 445864, when you will be asked where you wish to use it – so that it can be ready there when you arrive.
- Buildings at Quarry Bank are lit with a mixture of fluorescent and LED lighting, with some natural light via windows. Visitors with visual impairment should be aware that these are old buildings with irregular floors, and to maintain the historic atmosphere of the place they are not brightly lit.
- A hearing induction loop is available at all till points at Quarry Bank, as well as the Alex (function room) positioned above the restaurant.
- All doors are manually operated, open outwards and offer a passage more than 75 cm wide, unless stated otherwise below. Some of the doors to the Weaving Shed Restaurant, function rooms and entrances to the mill have door closers that require more force to open the door than is recommended by Building Regulations. This is being reviewed, where possible doors will be made compliant with that guidance. Automatic doors are fitted at the Visitor Reception and in the Garden Café.
- Mobile telephone reception in the Mill is poor as it is in a valley; the signal is better in the woods and the gardens.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

- There are brown road-signs from Wilmslow and the M56 on the approach to Manchester Airport. The entrance is signed, and the car park is down a short driveway.
- There are designated parking spaces on a flat, firm surface for visitors with disabilities. These spaces are for the use of visitors holding an official Blue Badge. If you need to park close to the entrance but do not have a Blue Badge, you may ask at visitor reception for a one-day pass to use those bays. The pass should be displayed on the dashboard, like a Blue Badge. Having parked, head for visitor reception.

Accessibility Guide

- The mill yard is very congested with people and schoolchildren gathering there or moving across it. For their safety, cars are not normally permitted in the yard. However, if you need to use a non-folding wheelchair, you may get permission to be dropped off in the yard. Please arrange this in advance with the visitor reception team (01625 445864). Please report your arrival at visitor reception, and we will arrange for access to the mill yard and for a team member to be present in the mill yard to facilitate your safe drop-off.
- There is a walking route to the site from Wilmslow, via the Carrs (public parkland by the River Bollin from Chancel Lane to Twinnies Bridge, Styal Road). The surface is natural and there are gradients of up to about 10% for short distances. The distance from Chancel Lane is about 2km (1.6 miles); from the carpark near Twinnies Bridge it is about 1km (0.6 mile) across National Trust land.
- For those arriving by bicycle or motorbike, there are cycle racks near the visitor reception and bicycle-only racks in the mill yard. Cyclists should dismount on approaching the mill yard.
- There is currently no bus service to Styal. However, there are trains from Manchester Airport and from Wilmslow to Styal station. They now run hourly in both directions during our opening hours, seven days a week. The slope up to Station Road from the platform from north-bound trains is 12% for 40 m; on the south-bound side it is 6% for 70 m. It is about 0.6 mile (1km) from the station to visitor reception. The shortest and safest route to walk is via Holt's Lane, which is traffic-free after the first 100 m.

Visitor Reception

- All visitors should enter the site through Visitor Reception, where we will help you choose what to do during your visit. If you are a member of the National Trust, you should check in here. If you are not a member, you may buy your entrance ticket here. Make bookings here to visit the Apprentice House and the Workers' Cottage.
- The stone tile floor is level. The service counter is 77 cm high. There are low benches inside and outside Visitor Reception, but they do not have arms.
- A braille guide to the Mill is available from Visitor Reception; and maps of the gardens can be borrowed at Visitor Reception or at the garden entrances.
- A large print guide is available to borrow from Visitor Reception.
- We have four 69 cm-wide wheelchairs that you may borrow from Visitor Reception. They are not self-propelled – you must have a helper to push. They can pass through all doorways on the site, except the entrance to the Mill Manager's Offices in the Mill.
- Doorways inside the mill allow manual and electric wheelchairs up to 90 cm wide to be taken inside. Powered scooters and buggies are not allowed in the mill. You may borrow our manual wheelchairs to overcome these limitations.

From Visitor Reception it is:

- 300 m to the mill yard, for the Mill, cafe, shop, function rooms and accessible toilet, on tarmac surfaces with down-gradients up to 13%.

Accessibility Guide

- 200 m to Quarry Bank House, on tarmac surfaces with down-gradients up to 13%.
- 250 m to the glasshouses, café, shop, and accessible toilet, on a level compacted gravel surface.
- 100 m to the Apprentice House and Apprentice House Garden, on a compacted gravel surface with some 20 m at a gradient of 7%.
- 400 m to the Worker's Cottage and Village Hub, on level compacted gravel and cobbled surfaces; and
- 450 m to the entrance kiosk for the garden, on tarmac and compacted gravel surfaces with down-gradients up to 13%, from where you can walk by the River Bollin for a further 600 m, on a level compacted gravel surface.

Toilets

- There are accessible toilets in Visitor Reception, in the toilet block in the mill yard, in the back sheds behind the large glasshouse in the upper garden, and in the Styal Village Hub.
- The accessible toilet in the Visitor Reception building is 2.1 m by 1.6 m wide. It is not in a public area so please ask a member of staff.
- The accessible toilet in the mill yard is 2.4 m by 3.5 m wide and the door has assisted opening. This toilet includes a 'Space to Change'.
- The accessible toilet in the back sheds is 2.2 m by 1.4 m wide. There is an historic door-latch to the toilet, but this is decorative, not functional.
- There is a family toilet with baby changing facilities in the mill yard, and there are baby-changing facilities in the accessible toilet in the back sheds.
- All toilets have automatic hand-driers and stone tile floors except that in Visitor Reception.

Mill

The Mill at Quarry Bank is a complex series of buildings with different floor levels. They are connected via two staircases: staircase A and staircase B, several ramps, and a passenger lift. Having its own power supply, independent of the mains, the lift **can** be used in the event of an emergency. Up to eight wheelchairs, their passengers and carers can be safely evacuated via the lift. To ensure that there are never more than eight wheelchairs in the mill at any one time, we ask that all wheelchair users start their visit to the mill at the main Mill Entrance, in the mill yard, opposite the Mill Shop.

Motorised wheelchairs, but not powered scooters or buggies, are allowed in the mill. However, as some of the passageways are narrow wheelchairs must be no more than 900mm wide.

Accessibility Guide

In the very unlikely event of an emergency evacuation, your primary route to safety would be via the lift. If that route is blocked, or is unavailable, evacuation will be via an Evac Chair or a stair-climber. Wheelchair users must be able to transfer themselves into these devices. Parts of level 1 and level -1 have stone and concrete floors. All other parts of the mill have wooden floorboards, which are in places uneven.

The lighting throughout the mill is predominantly from LED fixtures. There are also windows providing natural light in many of the galleries, but during the winter months it can be gloomy in places.

The main entrance to the mill is off the tarmacked driveway, through a 910 mm wide doorway. Staff or volunteers located there will be happy to help you during your visit.

From the entrance, you can visit the following exhibition spaces.

- The Mill Manager's Offices
 - Access to these rooms is level, through two doors, which are between 72 cm and 86 cm wide with one exception, which is only 63 cm and will not admit most wheelchairs, 789mm, 768mm, 865mm, 722mm and 762mm wide respectively.
- Samuel's Industrial Enterprise
 - Access from the mill entrance via a 6.7m ramp, at a 4% gradient, or by three steps. There is then a sliding door that during summer months is open; in winter months the door is closed but a volunteer located in this space will be happy to help with this. Alternatively, there is access via a passenger lift.
 - In this gallery there are exhibitions and displays lit with spotlights.
 - In the far corner of this gallery there is a periodic technical demonstration on the processing of cotton from the raw material through to woven cloth.
 - Displays in this gallery are at least a metre apart.
- The Weaving Shed
 - Access is via staircase B or an 8 m long ramp with a handrail, which is at a 4% decline from Samuel's Industrial Enterprise.
 - There are regular demonstrations of powered looms taking place in this space.
 - At the far end of the gallery there is a wheelchair turning circle 1.7 m by 2.4 m wide.
 - The narrowest passage in this gallery is 1.1 m wide.
 - It can be very noisy in this gallery, and we recommend that visitors do not spend more than 10 minutes there; ear-defenders are available for visitor use.
- The Workforce
 - Access is via the passenger lift, staircase A, or an 8 m ramp at 3% incline via the Cotton Processing Room.
 - To aid visibility of a 4-minute video shown in the centre of this gallery, blinds are installed on the windows which reduce the lighting levels. There are LED lights throughout the gallery which provide adequate light for moving around.

Accessibility Guide

- The audio-visual experience has fast moving projected imagery and moving lights; this may not be suitable for some people.
- There are also several podium exhibition stands; they are designed to be accessible and include interactive audio elements.
- There are benches in this gallery which have fixed arm rests in combination of different positions.
- Cotton Processing Room
 - Access is via staircase B or an 8 m ramp at 3% decline via The Workforce.
 - There are regular demonstrations of cotton spinning machines in this room, these can be very noisy.
 - There are several passing points; the narrowest section of the room is 97 cm wide.
- Story Space
 - Access is via the passenger lift, staircase A or a 6 m ramp at a 3% incline from Exhibition Space.
 - This is a flexible exhibition space, telling stories based on the archives of Quarry Bank. These include an area to view items from the collection, a reading space, and an activity space, all related to the current exhibition in the Exhibition Space.
- Exhibition Space
 - Access is via staircase B or a 6 m ramp at 3% decline from Story Space.
 - This is also a flexible exhibition space. Access will always be a prime design consideration.
- Water Power
 - Access is via the passenger lift, staircases A, C and D, or two short ramps of 3.3m and a 1.7m ramp at 6% incline from Mule Room.
 - In this gallery you can see the top of the water wheel that powered the mill.
 - This gallery can get cold as it is more exposed to the elements because of the water wheel.
 - There are interactive models in this gallery which have been designed so that a wheelchair user can easily engage with them.
- Mule Room
 - Access is via staircase B or two short ramps at 1.7m and 3.3 m at a 6% decline from Waterpower.
 - The walkway through this room is 965mm cm wide; there is one passing point in the middle of the room and space at the far end to turn a wheelchair.
 - There are regular demonstrations of the cotton mule in this room. Whilst there is some noise when the machine is running, it is quieter than the other machine floors.

Accessibility Guide

- This gallery is kept warm to provide the correct temperature for using cotton on the mule.
- Brain Power
 - Access is via staircase C, which has 18 treads or a 19 m flagstone slope ramp at 19% decline from the Mill yard.
 - The floor throughout this gallery is flagstones.
- Steam Power
 - Access is via two ramps of 1.2 m at 4% incline and a 4.6 m ramp at 5% incline from Brain Power.
 - There is a mezzanine level walkway within Steam Power, which allows visitors to see the steam engines from above; this is accessed via a metal staircase with 13 treads.
 - There is often steam in the air and it can become humid in this gallery, especially in summer months.
 - There is a volunteer demonstrator based in this gallery who is happy to assist if required.

Apprentice House

- Entrance to the Apprentice House is through a gate into the Apprentice House Garden, down a 7% compacted gravel slope, and then through another gate into the cobbled yard and thence into the kitchen. Staff are available to help if needed.
- Entrance to the Apprentice House is only with a guided tour. These may be booked at Visitor Reception. The entrance door to the Apprentice House is at the rear of the house, over cobbles. There is a small step into the kitchen, but staff can arrange for a ramp to be affixed to the step. The door is manually operated by a member of staff.
- The Apprentice House ground floor is stone and the first-floor wood.
- The lighting in the Apprentice House is deliberately limited to provide authenticity; it is largely lit by natural lighting from the windows.
- To reach the first-floor visitors need to climb a short, steep, narrow set of stairs into the dormitory – there is no lift. There are three steps leading from the boy's dormitory to the girl's dormitory. To return to the ground floor there is another flight of steep stairs, which have a small landing and twist to the left before reaching the ground. The exit the house via the Hall door has a permanent ramp in place.
- There are low benches available in the Hall, the boys' dormitory, and House Place. Visitors are permitted to sit on the small, low beds in the dormitory. There are a few chairs available in the kitchen.

Accessibility Guide

- For visitors unable to access the first floor, during the tour, our guides provide a variety of materials to inform visitors of the history of the parts of the house that are inaccessible to them.
- We have a virtual tour of the upper floors of the Apprentice House on a tablet. This can be viewed in the Apprentice House.
- Due to the narrow spaces in the Apprentice House, power wheelchairs and power mobility vehicles are not permitted in the house.

Quarry Bank House

- This is about 200 m from Visitor Reception down gradients of 6% to 13% on tarmac surfaces. Visitors can be taken to and from the house by the buggy.
- There is a 10 cm high sill at the entrance door, but thereafter there is level access to all parts of the building open to visitors; floors are stone flags or wood or are carpeted.
- Staff are at hand to answer questions and facilitate access to rooms.
- The nearest toilet is about 150 m away in the mill yard.

Worker's Cottage

- This is about 400 m from Visitor Reception along level compacted gravel paths and then some 50 m over cobbles. Visitors require a timed ticket to visit (groups of 8 people maximum); tickets are available from Visitor Reception.
- Entrance to the building is up four 20 cm steps with handrails on both sides. There is no wheelchair access but there is information on the cottage interior at the Styal Village Hub. Floors are lino-covered or stone-flagged.
- The upper floor is reached by a steep and twisting wooden staircase; descent is by the same route. The cellar is down stone stairs – returning by the same way.
- The nearest toilet is 40 m away in the Styal Village Hub.
- We have a virtual tour of the Worker's Cottage on tablets located in the village hub.

Styal Village Hub

- This is about 400 m from Visitor Reception, along level compacted gravel paths and then some 50 m over cobbles. The path goes through two latched field-gates, which unaided wheelchair users may find difficult to open; we are seeking a solution to this. Visitors can be taken to and from Styal Village by the buggy; drop-off is 100 m from the Hub.
- There is level access to the building and to all areas open to visitors. As well as displays of village life, a video shows the interior of the worker's cottage and the Trust's conservation work there – for those who cannot access that building or cannot get a ticket to visit it.

- There is an accessible toilet in the Hub for the use of visitors.

Gardens

- The gardens are located below and above a cliff face, being one flank of the River Bollin gorge.
- The paths in the gardens are made with compacted gravel, flagged stones or cobbles.
- There are benches located throughout the gardens, with spaces to park a wheelchair or pushchair beside them.
- The garden below the cliff, known today as the **Lower Garden**, was the Gregs' ornamental garden. It has two entrances:
 - It can be reached in about 300 m from the mill yard by descending the sloping cobbled path (13% for about 10 m) around the Mill Manager's Cottage (not open to the public), crossing the river by a wide wooden bridge and taking the path across the level Mill Meadow. The river is then re-crossed by a 105 cm wide bridge walkway.
 - There is also a path from Quarry Bank House with a gradient of 20% down to the Lower Garden.
- The compacted gravel paths in the Lower Garden have slopes up to 15% for lengths of 5-10 m.
- The Lower Garden is beside the River Bollin, with steep banks and fast-flowing water. A nearly level route out of the formal garden area and into the Chapel Woods, by the river, extends for about 600 m from the garden entry kiosk (one-way distance). For those with wheelchairs, the exit is by the same route; otherwise, you have the option of climbing a number of steps and returning by a different route.
- Access from the Lower Garden to the Upper Garden is via steps or steep paths, suitable only for those who can walk unassisted. The gradient on the footpath bypassing the steps reaches 33% – so there is no direct access between the Lower Garden and the Upper Garden for powered mobility vehicles or wheelchairs of any type.
- The **Upper Garden** (originally the walled kitchen garden for the Greg family, and home to the restored glasshouses) has a café, shop, and accessible toilet. From Visitor Reception it is about 250 m to the glasshouse or the café. Parts of the Lower Garden may be seen from viewpoints within the Upper Garden.
- There is a doorway through the kitchen garden wall (beside the entrance to the shop), providing the shortest level access to the kitchen garden and the glasshouse, from the café, the shop, and the toilets.

Accessibility Guide

- The **large glasshouse** has level access from its east end (the right, seen from the garden); the door at the other end is locked. The narrowest point on this stone-flagged path is the 74 cm wide entrance doorway. The door is manually operated and opens inwards. The historic entrance to the central plant house is up three stone steps; there is no handrail. This part of the glasshouse houses exotic and tropical plants. The glazed areas either side of the central plant house are vineries with bays at different temperatures, for different grape varieties. Access from the glasshouse into the back shed's interpretation area, toilets and café is by two 17 cm steps down from the landing in the back sheds. Hand-powered wheelchairs are allowed in the large glasshouse but must leave by the door by which they entered. Powered mobility vehicles are not allowed in the glasshouse.
- The **small glasshouse** is entered up a step of 11 cm. Wheelchairs, whether powered or hand-propelled, are not allowed in the small glasshouse, due to the limited space inside.
- The lower garden is adjacent to the River Bollin, with steep banks and fast flowing water. A near-level route out of the formal garden area and into the Chapel Woods, near the river extends for about 600 m from the garden entry kiosk (one-way distance). For those with wheelchairs, the exit is by the same route; otherwise, you have the option of climbing a number of steps and returning by a different route.
- Dogs (other than Assistance Dogs) are not allowed in either glasshouse.
- Please see the map of the garden, available to borrow from the garden entrance kiosks and Visitor Reception, for more details.

Places to eat and drink

- There are three places on site where refreshments may be bought and consumed: the Weaving Shed Restaurant, Stables Ice Cream Parlour, and the Garden Café.
- **The Weaving Shed Restaurant** is approximately 40 m from the cobbled mill yard down a sloped flagstone path to the level restaurant entrance.
- There are two sets of doors into the restaurant. Members of staff are available to assist with the doors.
- There is an overflow seating area adjacent to the restaurant with level access via double doors.
- The floor of the main restaurant is stone, and the overflow area is wooden. The counter is 92 cm high; staff will assist customers in obtaining items of food; visitors can be seated if they experience difficulty queuing and will then be assisted by our staff.
- There is a mixture of furniture in the restaurant, tables of varying height and size, banquette seating, as well as chairs with and without arms.
- There is an accessible toilet in the function block above the Weaving Shed Restaurant, on the first floor. This toilet is accessed by the lift or two flights of stairs. The lift cabin is 1.3 m wide by 1.5 m deep.

Accessibility Guide

- The accessible toilet is 1.5 m wide and 2.0 m in length. The toilet also contains baby-changing facilities.
- **The Stables Ice Cream Parlour** is in the mill yard. There is a 15 cm step up from the mill yard into the Parlour. The counter height is 90 cm. Seating is on the mill yard immediately outside the Parlour.
- **The Garden Café** is in the Upper Garden and is accessible via a flat route from the car park.
- There is an automatic door into the café.
- The floor of the café is polished concrete. It is counter service; staff will assist customers in obtaining food and drink.
- There is a mixture of chairs with and without arms and an external seating area outside the main entrance.
- There is an ice cream window to the side of the building.

Shops

- There are three shops on the site.
- The largest of them, the Mill Shop, is in the cobbled mill yard.
- Access to the shop is by stone stairs with seven steps with a handrail on both sides, or by a powered platform lift for wheelchairs.
- The Mill Shop is carpeted.
- If customers are unable to reach shelved items, staff will assist them.
- There is no large print version of the price list, but staff will be happy to assist by telling customers the price of items.
- There is a second-hand book shop, located in the former stables in the mill yard.
- The third shop is in the upper garden back sheds, behind the glasshouse. It is about 250 m from Visitor Reception and 30 m from the garden café, across essentially level compacted gravel or stone-flagged surfaces.
- The floor in the shop is flagged stone.

Children's Play Area

- The play area is reached by going across the cobbled mill yard and through the pair of iron gates in front of the Mill Manager's Cottage. From there the route are over near-level compacted gravel paths. This play area provides modern play facilities including a slide, climbing frame and other play structures; these are on several levels, with steps between. The ground surfaces are natural.

Weir, hydro-electric generator, and fish pass

- The weir of 1796, and the hydro-electric plant, and the fish and eel pass installed in 2016, are about 200 m upstream from the mill. They are reached by a level compacted gravel path heading upstream, through the Mill Manager's Cottage Garden, from the mill yard. **NB. Following the severe floods of 2019 we had to close this path. We hope to re-open it as soon as possible. Meanwhile, you can see these structures from the mill meadow on the other side of the river, (accessible over grassed meadow), where there is an interpretation board about the hydro scheme and the fish pass.**

Contact details for more information

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Accessibility Guide

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| Mill | Children's Play Area |
| Quarry Bank House | Bench |
| Apprentice House and Garden | Baby-changing facilities |
| Styal Village Hub | Accessible toilets |
| Chapel | Shuttle service |
| Styal Cross | Parking |
| Visitor Reception | Accessible parking |
| Weaving Shed Restaurant and Ice-cream Parlour | Not accessible for wheelchairs and mobility vehicles |
| Mill Shop and Pre-loved Bookshop | Steep gradient |
| Garden Shop | Moderate gradient |
| Garden Café | Path |
| Garden | Cobbled path |
| Weir | Steps |
| Chapel Woods | Footbridge |

