

Gibside Property Access Statement

Gibside, Burnopfield, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE16 6BG

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Introduction

Gibside is an 18th century landscape garden located in the Derwent Valley in Gateshead. It is situated on the side of a hill so many of the paths involve slopes of varying gradients and uneven surfaces. All dogs are welcome, including assistance dogs.

NB - Mobile phone reception with some service providers is poor across the site. In an emergency during opening hours please make contact on the phone number above as soon as you are able or call the Duty Manager on 07870 378190 or speak to a National Trust staff member or volunteer who can use a radio to assist.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

Gibside is sign posted from all directions with brown tourist signs, including from the A1 near the MetroCentre. The entrance to the property is located on the B6314 at the bottom of a steep hill. There is a road entrance and pedestrian entrance, both surfaced and accessible by wheelchair users. There are two car parks, both with free parking. The main car park (on your left as you arrive on the road entrance) is level, with bonded gravel on top of tarmac surface and has **14 designated bays** for visitors with disabilities. It is approximately 100m from Visitor Reception. The second car park, the overflow car park, is located further along the entrance road and is closer to Visitor Reception. The overflow car park is roughly surfaced with some loose stones and has **7 designated bays** for visitors with disabilities. The designated bays have a sign that includes the mobile number for Visitor Reception should a visitor arriving with access needs require assistance from their vehicle.



Access into the estate from Visitor Reception is via a **raised wooden walkway** that has a uphill gradient (1:9) with nonslip decking and handrails on both sides and a level rest area if required. At the top there are 9 steps also with a hand rail at each side and an additional roughly surfaced path for pushchair use (1:12) The walkway is not recommended for wheelchair users. Some wheelchair users opt to travel up and down

the road from Visitor Reception which is steep gradient (1:12) but smoothly surfaced tarmac.



A **Mobility Vehicle** operates from Visitor Reception. This vehicle is wheelchair accessible and visitors who have disabilities requiring access assistance can catch this to take them up the hill to Market Place. The mobility vehicle can also be requested from the disabled car park bays if the visitor requiring assistance calls the mobile number on the signs. If the vehicle is unsuitable for a visitor with accessibility issues, visitors can stop at Visitor Reception in their vehicle and request to be dropped off at the top of the hill in Market Place and the person driving their vehicle can return to the car park to park their vehicle, and then head to Market Place to meet their friend or family member. The mobility vehicle can also be used by visitors requiring access assistance to travel to Gibside Stables. This service leaves Market Place at fifteen minutes past the hour and returns from the Stables at half past the hour.

WCs

There are three sets of toilets available to visitors, two of which have an accessible toilet. One is located in Market Place (size: 1.7m x 2.6m), with a left hand transfer rail, some natural light and automatic lighting with non-fluorescent bulbs), the second is located on the ground floor of the Stables (size: 1.8m x 2.5m, with a left hand transfer rail, some natural light and automatic lighting with non-fluorescent bulbs). There is an additional accessible toilet and shower facility upstairs at the Stables (size: 2.0m x 2.9m with the shower and 2.0m x 1.6m, both with right hand transfer rails, no natural light and automatic lighting with non-fluorescent bulbs) available for use by any visitors staying in the Stables residential centre or hiring the Bowes Room. All accessible toilet facilities have automatic hand driers. There are no Changing Places facilities with an adult hoist at the property. Baby change facilities are located in the three visitor toilet areas – at Market Place, Stables and Strawberry Castle.

Visitor Reception



Visitor Reception is located 100m past the main car park entrance at the top of a gradual surfaced slope. The building has large windows that allow lots of natural light and has two large doors (both 1m wide) at the front and side that are accessible to wheelchairs. The doors are manual opening with reception staff or volunteers to assist if required.

The floor is a non-slip vinyl surface with a wooden reception counter (1m at its highest point with a lower section of 750mm). Staff can also come round the desk to talk to someone who cannot see over the counter, and issue a clipboard for someone to rest on if required. There are three chairs with armrests that visitors can use. Currently there is no induction loop installed and no members of staff who have British Sign Language skills. At the time of this review the welcome staff are based outside the building and visitors proceed through an open gate to the right and check in on the path on the way to the raised walkway.

There are also **two all-terrain electric mobility scooters** to help visitors with mobility issues get around the estate that can be booked free of charge (preferably prior to a visit to ensure availability). Full training is given by staff prior to use of the scooters. There is also a wheelchair and three all-terrain pushchairs that visitors can borrow.

There are two historic ruins (Orangery and Hall) and two accessible buildings (Chapel and Stables) on the estate.

Orangery (ruin)



The Orangery is located approximately 800m from Visitor Reception. Access to the ruin itself is along a level path with three stone steps to enter into the ruin. There are no ramps for wheelchair access. The pathways within the ruin are loose gravel.

(Photo credit – Geoff Brown)

Hall (ruin)



The Hall is located approximately 1600m from Visitor Reception. There is no permitted access to any visitors into the Hall itself. Access to outside the Hall is along the roughly surfaced Avenue road or grassed tree lined Avenue. There is then a roughly surfaced level track that can take visitors in front of the ruin.

Chapel



The Chapel is approximately 600m from Visitor Reception, across Market Place, passing the café and shop and turning left in front of the toilet building. This level and surfaced path takes wheelchair users or pushchairs behind the building and up a ramp on the field side of the building. The entrance to the building is up a flight of ten stone steps. There is a stair climber that trained staff members can use to assist any wheelchair users up to the Chapel door entrance.

If a visitor needs this facility, if possible, please contact the property before your visit to ensure there is a trained member of staff available to assist and then inform a member of the Visitor Reception team on arrival. The portico and floor of the Chapel is made of

stone and is level. The door to the Chapel is approximately 1.5m wide. There is some natural light and some non-fluorescent spot lights and no sources of heating.

Stables



concreted into the toilet lobby (location of the disabled toilet).

The Stables is located approximately 2km from Visitor Reception. It can be accessed along the roughly surfaced Avenue Road which is level until it reaches the end of the grassed Avenue and heads up the hill for approximately 500m. Entrance to the Stables courtyard itself is via a level and smooth surface path. The initial entrance surface under the archway is uneven cobbles that return to the smooth surfaced bonded gravel that extends around the courtyard. Courtyard rooms have a cobbled surface, which is

Food and Beverage

There are three catering outlets at Gibside:

Main café – The main café is located in Market Place approximately 500m from Visitor Reception. There are two access points, one on the front of the building via two wooden steps onto a wooden deck and the other is on the side of the building via a set of bi-fold doors that open to over 1.5m. Staff and volunteers are on hand to assist with any



wheelchair users or large pushchairs that are wishing to gain access into the café. The majority of tables have access between them of approximately 1.2m. The tills do not have induction loops, and the menu is not available in Braille but is available in large print on the wall. There are large handled cutlery and double handled mugs available. The counter is approximately 850mm in height, but staff are able to come around the counter to assist a wheelchair user if required.

Carriage House Coffee Shop – The coffee shop is located in the Stable's Courtyard on the ground floor. The door is manual, and assistance can be given by staff or volunteers if a wheelchair user needs help. Access to the door is up a small ramp to allow wheelchair or pushchair access. The coffee shop is small with only five tables, wooden chairs, none of which have arm rests. The counter is approximately 850mm but staff will come around to the front of the counter if a wheelchair user required assistance. There is outdoor seating.

Strawberry Castle Kiosk – There is no visitor access within the kiosk. Service to visitors is through a window over a large counter. Staff will come to the other side of the counter to assist with any service requirements that a wheelchair user may have.

Second-hand Bookshop



The second-hand bookshop (formerly the shop) is located in Market Place approximately 500m from Visitor Reception. It is a wooden building with four wooden steps in the front with handrails on both sides and a ramped access on the side with a door (manual opening). The floor inside has a non-slip vinyl surface with space for wheelchairs to move around the tables. The counter is over 850mm in height but staff will come around the counter to assist and serve with any wheelchair users who need additional help. The till does not have an

induction loop.

Garden/Estate

There is a visitor welcome leaflet available to all visitors on arrival at Visitor Reception. This contains a map that identifies all areas of the estate and specifically lists accessibility support available. Steps, stiles and steep slopes are identified on the map given to mobility tramper users so a visitor can avoid these routes if necessary. Any visitor can request this map. There is a large print map on display in Market Place. Paths into Market Place are smoothly surfaced with bonded gravel. The area in front of the café and second-hand bookshop is loose gravel on a level surface. The remainder of the paths and tracks around the garden and estate are roughly surfaced and of varying gradients. There are a number of metal seats with back and arm rests along the Avenue, wooden benches with back and arm rests plus some wooden perch seats around the estate and stone perch benches in the Walled Garden along with deck and director style chairs. There are some ponds around the estate and a gravel path along the riverside. This path has a steep drop in some places down to the river itself.

Play Area

There are three play areas at Gibside as well as the West Wood Workout.

The first is near the Stables, known as the natural playscape. It contains natural play features within a woodland setting, therefore the surface is uneven and rough and the play features include logs for balancing or climbing or squeezing through.

The third is the Low Ropes Challenge which is located in West Wood in an old quarry. Access to the low ropes is along a woodland path which is uneven and roughly surfaced. There is no support around the ropes course apart from any given by an accompanying parent or carer. The ropes are approximately 1m in height from the ground.

The second play area (Strawberry Castle) is the largest and is located behind the Chapel along a surfaced path. There are several sections to the play area, the majority of which are made of wood and include climbing equipment with slides. The safety surfaces are a mix of rubber matting and bark chippings surrounded by uneven grassy areas depending upon the play feature. There is also a water and sand feature that is constructed of raised rocks and boulders. Some of the areas also are within a raised area with stepped access. There is a team swing with a large net seat that is located on the level, a zip wire and swings which include infant and 3-suspension swings.

Finally, in the West Wood, on the long straight path, there is the West Wood Workout. This is a course that includes several stop offs along the road with wooden and metal equipment, including pull up bars, a sit up bench and balance beams. The safety surfaces

for these areas are mostly bark chippings surrounded by uneven grassy/bare soil areas, depending on the play feature and location.

Trails

There are four waymarked trails on site ranging from 2.2 miles to 5.5 miles in distance. The visitor welcome leaflet map shows these routes as well as the large scale map in Market Place. Waymarker posts around the estate indicate the direction of these routes.



All routes start and finish in Market Place beside the large map.

Liberty trail (purple)

The route for this trail leads you round key historic features in the landscape. The total distance is 2.4 miles and takes about 1 hour to walk this route at a moderate pace. There are some slopes along the route but steps can be avoided with an alternative route highlighted in the Welcome leaflet.

Explorer Trail (orange)

The route for this trail leads you along the Avenue and around West Wood. The total distance is 2.2 miles and takes about 1 hour to walk at a moderate pace. There are some slopes along the route but no steps.

Valley Views Trail (pink)

The route for this trail leads you along the Avenue, up through the farm and down through Snipes Dene. The total distance for this route is 4.4 miles and takes about 1 hour and 50 minutes to walk at a moderate pace. This route includes several gates, steps and stiles, plus unsurfaced paths through farmland as well as the gravel paths within the woodlands. There are several steep slopes along this route.

Wonders of Nature Trail (green)

The route for this trail leads you along the Avenue, down to the riverside, up through Snipes Dene and around West Wood. The total distance for this route is 5.5 miles and takes about 2 hours and 10 minutes to walk at a moderate pace. This route includes several very steep slopes down to the riverside and back up into Snipes Dene.

There are two additional routes that are not waymarked that are approximately 1 mile in distance and on the level that we can recommend to visitors who may have access issues or only wish to walk a very short distance.

Avenue Amble – this route takes you from Market Place, behind the Chapel and onto the Avenue. A visitor then has the option to walk as far along the Avenue as they wish to go returning on the same route.

Garden Stroll – this route takes you from Market Place, into the Walled Garden, out again to the Orangery and return in the same route. There is also a newly installed gravel

path along the outside of the Walled Garden leading to the Chapel as an alternative return route.

Dogs at Gibside

We actively encourage good dog behaviour and have a team of volunteers, who patrol the site, who aim to highlight good dog behaviour and inform dog owners that not all visitors are fond of dogs, in fact some are scared, including some people who visit who have disabilities. Dogs need to be on leads at all times particularly as livestock do graze in some areas so please be alert to this, however there is an enclosed area where dogs are allowed off the lead -next to the Stables.

Further information about trails around the property is available on our main website.
<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/gibside>

Contact details for more information

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Map

Please turn over...

(Map credit - Neil Gower)

