

The Courts Garden Access Statement

Address: The Courts Garden, Holt, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6RR

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Email address: courtsgarden@nationaltrust.org.uk

Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-courts-garden



Introduction

- The Courts Garden is a classic early twentieth-century garden in the English style. It is situated on a fairly level site and is laid out in a series of yew-hedged garden 'rooms', which lead into each other through a series of grass, flagstone, brick and stone paths. Although there are a few low steps, the majority of the garden can be accessed without having to use these. There is also an orchard and arboretum with access over mown grass and wood-chip paths. Although level, these areas can become muddy in wet weather.
- The quality of mobile phone reception varies between providers. If you have a problem whilst at The Courts Garden, please call reception on 01225 782875 in the first instance.
- Assistance dogs are welcome throughout. Due to the nature of the garden we regret that other dogs are not allowed.
- The house is currently not open to visitors.



Left to right: Entrance to the Village Hall car park; Signage opposite the entrance to the Village Hall car park; Entrance to the Glove Factory car park.

Arrival and parking facilities

- The garden is situated on the south side of the B3107 through Holt. There is a brown sign directing visitors to the property on the roundabout which connects the B3107 to the A350 in Melksham. The main entrance is set back slightly from the road, opposite the Village Hall and Holt Superstore.
- Parking is in the Village Hall car park on the north side of the road. Turn into The Midlands and then turn right immediately behind the Village Hall. The car park is level and tarmacked throughout. There are two Blue Badge parking bays.
- The car park is approximately 55 yards (50m) from the entrance to the property. There is a slight slope at the entrance to the car park, with a railed pedestrian refuge along the side of the Village Hall. Please take care when crossing the busy B3107 to reach the garden entrance.
- If the designated Blue Badge parking spaces are full, there is an area immediately in front of the entrance gate where drivers can drop off their passengers. There is a stone bench just inside the entrance gate where dropped off passengers can wait for the rest of their party.
- There is additional parking further along the Midlands at The Glove Factory Studios, approximately 131 yards (120m) from the entrance to The Courts Garden. There is a designated Blue Badge parking area just inside the main entrance gate, to the right, which can

take two vehicles. This has a gravelled surface. The pavements between the car park and the entrance to The Courts Garden are level and tarmacked.

WCs

- There is an accessible toilet in the toilet block, which has an emergency alarm and is in excess of 1.5m x 2.2m in size. It has left and right-hand transfer.
- The accessible toilet is in the toilet block to the left of the conservatory, approximately 60 yards (55m) from reception.
- The toilet has an automatic hand dryer and contains a baby change unit.
- All the toilets have fluorescent lighting. The accessible toilet in the WC block also has a roof light which allows natural light in.



Accessible toilet in the toilet block

Visitor Reception



- Visitors are welcomed at a wooden reception hut just beside the entrance gate to the garden. The hut is accessible to staff only and visitors are greeted by staff inside the hut (pictured above). The hut window is 112cm high, with a lower window 94cm high to the right.
- The entrance is level and the path is made of old flagstones (pictured right), which are slightly uneven, so care should be taken.
- The main entrance gate (pictured far right), which remains open when The Courts Garden is open, is relatively narrow, at just under 80cm, but accessible for most wheelchairs and buggies. For wider wheelchairs and mobility scooters, the reception team will assist you to the double wooden gates 15m to the right of the main visitor entrance.
- There is an induction loop in the reception area.
- Large print guides are available, please ask for these at visitor reception.



- During normal opening times there is one manual wheelchair available at reception for use in the garden. It is advisable to call ahead of your visit if you wish to make use of this. You are also welcome to bring your own. There is a sensory pack available to borrow with noise canceling headphones and some sensory toys, please ask at visitor reception if you would like to borrow it for your visit.



Entrance path with plant sales and the visitor reception hut on the right

Retail

- There is a small retail area beside the reception hut (pictured right), which sells plants grown at The Courts Garden, and a limited range of other items.
- The plants are set out on a low table and the other items are on shelves in a small covered area.
- Staff will be pleased to assist with reaching items or explaining prices and details if required.

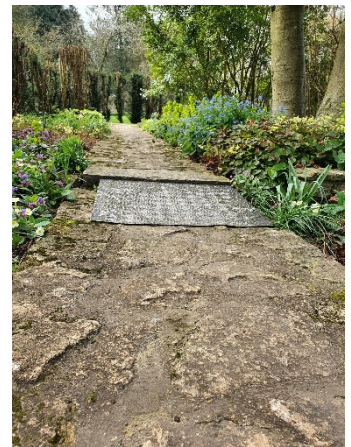


Garden



Aerial photo of the formal gardens and lower arboretum (photo courtesy of Shooting Reels)

- The garden is approximately 2.8 hectares (7 acres) in total and is divided into a series of formal garden ‘rooms’ and a more relaxed arboretum area.
- The garden is largely level, with a few very shallow slopes and ramps (example ramp pictured right). There are a limited number of steps and alternative routes are signposted.
- There are a small number of gates, which are kept open along the route. These are wide enough for wheelchair access.



- The route around the garden is over stone paths, brick paving, lawn and cut grass (pictured right). The arboretum can be explored via wood-chip paths. Lawns and grass areas are kept short throughout the season to improve access. However, during wet weather the grass can become soft and muddy, which will limit the use of wheelchairs in some areas.



- There are a number of ponds and water features around the garden, the deepest of which are around 1m. These are not fenced off and particular care should be taken in these areas. The dye pool can be crossed by a shallow arching 'Giverny'-style bridge (below), which has hand rails on both sides.
- There is a wildlife area within the arboretum which is used as a forest school and natural play area for families. Although level, paths in this section are narrow and the ground is soft, making this area difficult for wheelchair access. We can't guarantee this area will be open every day.



Entrance to the arboretum from the kitchen garden

- There are a range of wooden, metal and stone seats and benches positioned in the majority of 'rooms' and areas of the garden in both sun and shade.



Left: the bridge over the dye pool. Right: the Chinese bench overlooking the Lily Pond

Refreshments

- There is an NT coffee trailer located in the upper arboretum serving hot and cold drinks, light snacks and ice-creams.
- You are also welcome to bring your own refreshments and picnics. Please remember to take your litter home.
- Limited wooden picnic bench seating is available in the orchard (below). Rugs are available to borrow; please ask at reception.








Contact details for more information

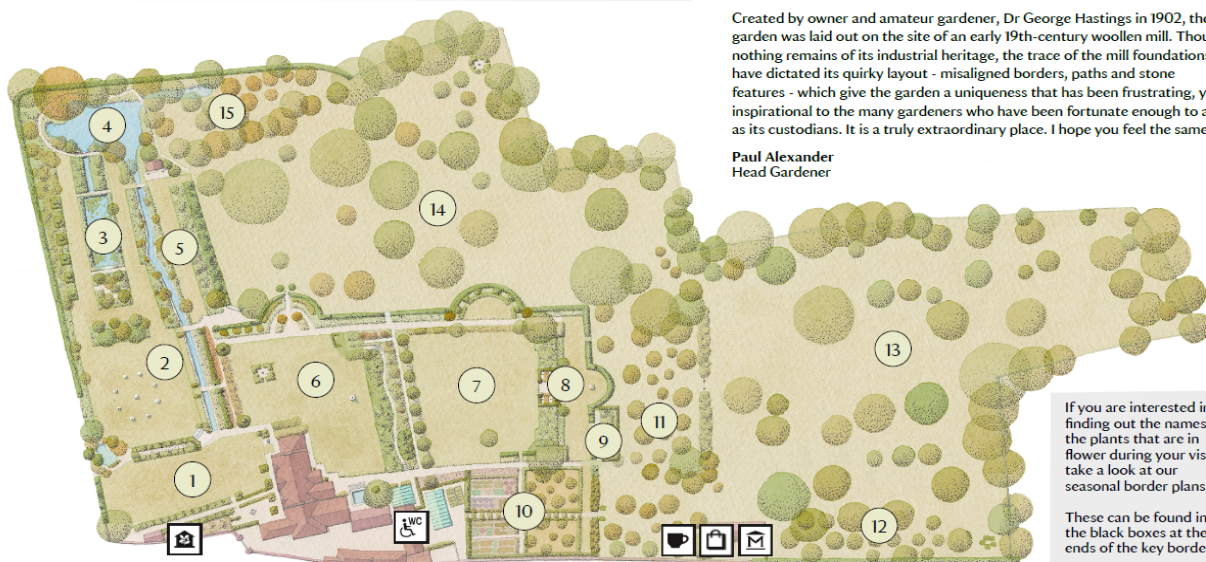
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Date updated: 01 February 2023

Site Map

Map key	
1 Entrance lawn	12 Nut walk
2 Pillar lawn	13 Upper arboretum
3 Lily pond	14 Lower arboretum
4 Dye pool	15 Forest school
5 Temple borders	 Visitor reception
6 House lawn	 Takeaway refreshments: hot and cold drinks and snacks
7 Main lawn	 Toilets, including accessible toilet and baby change
8 Sundial lawn	 Second-hand bookshop
9 Sunken garden	 Orchard room exhibition
10 Kitchen garden	
11 Orchard and picnic area	



Extraordinary by design

It was an ambition of mine to work at The Courts Garden since my first visit in 2005.

The garden has a magical quality that I have never quite been able to put my finger on, but one that seems to anchor me here, unlike any other garden I have cared for during my 20 years of experience with the National Trust. I love the constant changing of seasonal colour, texture and mood, as well as talking with visitors keen to find out more about this quintessentially 20th-century English garden.

Created by owner and amateur gardener, Dr George Hastings in 1902, the garden was laid out on the site of an early 19th-century woollen mill. Though nothing remains of its industrial heritage, the trace of the mill foundations have dictated its quirky layout - misaligned borders, paths and stone features - which give the garden a uniqueness that has been frustrating, yet inspirational to the many gardeners who have been fortunate enough to act as its custodians. It is a truly extraordinary place. I hope you feel the same.

Paul Alexander
Head Gardener

If you are interested in finding out the names of the plants that are in flower during your visit, take a look at our seasonal border plans.

These can be found in the black boxes at the ends of the key borders.