

## Gunby Estate, Hall and Gardens Access Statement

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### Introduction

1. The Gunby Estate sits at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds and visitors can enjoy the eight-acres of gardens and up to three floors of the house or explore the wider parkland and 1,500-acres of estate, which is mostly tenant farmland. The landscape is relatively flat and offers a gentle walk, but due to its nature the ground is very uneven in places.
2. Mobile phone reception is intermittent and varies depending on network you are on – 02, Vodafone, BT and EE offer the best coverage, and there is limited 4G on site. The holiday cottage nestled within the gardens provides a BT hotspot with a reasonable range. The office number to call in case of emergency is 01754 890102.
3. Assistance dogs are welcome everywhere, and well-behaved dogs on leads are welcome in all outside areas, the gallery and second-hand bookshop.
4. A booking system maybe in place during peak times (such as the summer holidays) to manage numbers – please check the website for up to date details. Supporters can visit up to three floors of the house (between 11am-2pm with a timed-ticket in February, March and October, and between 11am and 3pm between April and September), which are issued on a first-come-first-served basis from the stables. House ticket collection is available 15 minutes before the house opens. There is a one-way route around the house. Light levels are monitored in the house for conservation reasons and may vary throughout the visitor route. Visitors with large bags or bulky baby carriers and pushchairs may be asked to leave them at the stables where a member of the Visitor Experience Team will look after them for you.

### Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. Gunby is located on the main road to Skegness (A158) but you may be misdirected if you're following satnav as the postcode covers a wide area – the entrance is actually off the Gunby roundabout. There are some brown signs, located within 1 mile of the entrance.
2. The car park has 80 spaces, with six Blue Badge spaces and two wider family spaces. After you exit the roundabout and go over the cattle-grid, it is immediately to your left. Please be aware of pedestrians and other vehicles.
3. The car park surface is made up of loose gravel held in place by plastic webbing which provides a firm base. The pedestrian walkways are made up of a smaller gravel, while the parking spaces are made up of larger stones. The accessible parking spaces are made up of the same material.
4. There is a transfer 'buggy' available to shuttle visitors who might struggle with the walk up and down the Lime Tree Avenue to the entrance to the gardens. It has been adapted to accommodate a wheelchair. If for any reason the buggy isn't available, we offer that

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visitors can be dropped off at the top of the driveway by the driver (or in the case of the driver needing support arrange for them to park nearer the property). If you have any concerns about the walk, please let one of the Welcome Team know at the entrance to the car park and they will assist you.



5. The walk from the car park to the property entrance is approximately 480 metres and there is a gentle incline.
6. There is a 'perch' bench approximately halfway along the Lime Tree Avenue, and there are two 'perch' benches in the car park and a bench just inside the garden entrance. There is also outdoor seating in the courtyard.



## WCs

1. The Visitor Toilets are located in the courtyard, which is to your left and through the archway as you near the top of the Lime Tree Avenue. There is a partly modified toilet for wheelchair users which is unisex, and two separate toilets for the ladies.
2. The modified toilet is 220cm x 138cm. The door width is 81cm and opens outwards.
3. It is a right-hand transfer to the accessible WC.
4. There is no Changing Places facility on site.



5. The toilets are lit by a combination of low-level natural light and fluorescent lighting which comes on automatically when someone enters the toilet.
6. The toilets have automatic hand-dryers.



## Visitor Reception

1. To make admissions as easy as possible, tickets are being checked in the car park. As you drive into the car park you will be greeted by a member of the Welcome Team (in hi-vis). If you are National Trust member have your cards to hand so that we can scan them. You will then be asked to find a car park space. If you are purchasing your tickets on the day, you will be asked to find a parking space and come back to the Welcome Hut, where a member of the Welcome Team will make sure you have everything you need for your visit.
2. If the weather is inclement, the Welcome Team may be taking refuge in the Welcome Hut, but they will come out to meet you to check your tickets. The car park is all on one level.
3. If this is your first visit to Gunby (or first visit since the pandemic) we'll ask you to stop by the Welcome Hut as you head towards the property, so we can explain which direction to go and share with you what's on offer on the day of your visit.
4. If a trail is taking place on the day of your visit, it is likely that the Welcome Hut is where you will purchase your trail pack. We like contactless payments but can also take cash payments at the hut.
5. The Welcome Team will come out to greet you. Feel free to ask them any questions as they are always happy to assist.
6. As it is outside, the car park is exposed to the weather – the Welcome Team won't keep you long if it is raining, and there are nearby trees that cast shade so you can get out of the sunshine.
7. There are two 'perch' benches for you to sit on adjacent to the Welcome Hut.
8. There is no induction loop available at the Welcome Hut.
9. We have one outdoor manual wheelchair and one powered mobility vehicles available should you need to borrow one for your visit. We recommend calling or emailing ahead so we can make sure they are available for you at the time of your visit.
10. We have three sensory bags available to borrow that are kept at the Welcome Hut. Please ask one of the team and they will get one ready for you – inside there is a pair of ear defenders, and a selection of sensory toys including a fidget toy, a light up ball and an easy to hold magnifying glass.



## Garden

1. Currently we aren't handing out leaflets of the grounds, but you can download a map of the gardens from the website before you visit. We have an accessible map available for visitors to borrow which highlights the best route for a wheelchair or PMV which avoids steps and tight corners. There is a lot of space to spread out in the gardens, but some of the pathways in the Walled Gardens are narrow and there isn't room to pass other visitors.
2. The entrance to the gardens is at the top of the drive through a pair of wide ornamental gates that are kept open. The cattlegrid has recently been removed to make access easier.
3. Most of the paths in the garden are gravelled, and some in the Walled Gardens have central old stone slabs which were put in many years ago to aid the gardeners' wheelbarrows. They are worn with age and may be slippery after rain. The formal front garden has a stone path with herbs growing in the centre, and the Yew Hedges are accessed via grass paths. The spring flower walk is a grass path, as are the paths in the Rose Garden. The herb garden can be explored by a mixture of narrow stone or grass paths or admired from the main gravel path. The paths are part of the historic garden design, but you're welcome to walk or push a wheelchair on the smooth lawns.
4. The gardens are relatively level, but there is a 10% incline between the Kitchen Garden and the Walled Garden. There is an alternative route and any member of the team will be happy to assist in moving any barriers. There is a 5% slope along the path to the Apple Store.
5. There are very few steps in the garden, and they are all either single or two steps, with no handrail. There are a few slabs which may be slightly raised that may cause a barrier, but a member of the team will be happy to assist in finding an alternative route.

6. There are several gates on the route, but these are all held open during opening hours to avoid any unnecessary handling and to decrease the risk of transmitting coronavirus. Any gate that is closed should remain closed, with the exception of the garden gate that leads to the Church. Please close this behind you.
7. We like the gardens to feel as homely as possible, but you will see some of the plants and trees are labelled, and from time to time there are garden trails with extra interpretation.
8. There are several wooden benches located in the gardens at regular intervals.
9. PLEASE BE AWARE: There is a service walkway (a dry-moat) around the north, east and southern side of the house. It has a brick retaining wall below the sloped western end of the Main Lawn. It is not fenced off so please take care when walking nearby. There is a long canal Carp Pond at the centre of the gardens, separated from the pathways by garden borders.



## House

1. It is approximately 500 metres from the car park to the entrance of the house. There is an accessible drop-off point approximately 30 metres from the entrance.
2. Timed tickets for the house can be collected from the stable entrance in the courtyard.
3. There is a wide gravel driveway that leads to the front of the house and a pathway in front of the house which consists of flagstones (which are sometimes slippery after it has rained). This can be avoided by walking on the grass. There are 10 stone steps with no handrail at the front of the house which lead to the main entrance.



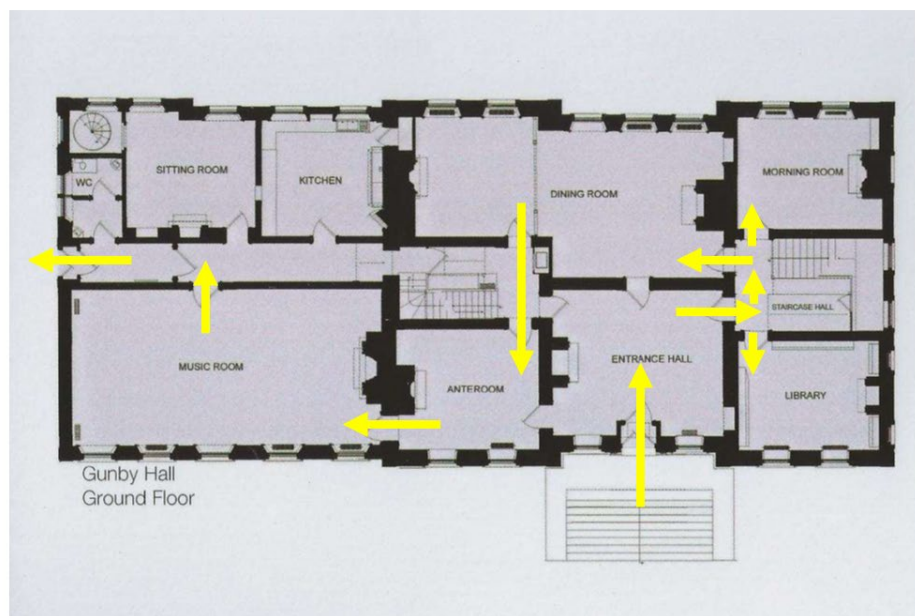
4. There is currently no ramp available to access the house.
5. You will be greeted by a member of the Visitor Experience Team who will open the door for you. The door opens inwards and is 1070mm wide.
6. There is an alternative entrance (normally the exit, but if weather conditions are poor, it may be used as the entrance on occasion) approximately 25metres from the main entrance. It is on the north side of the house and is accessed via a flagstone path from



the main entrance – there is a gully which may be a trip hazard or difficult to push a wheelchair over. Alternatively, it can be accessed from the courtyard. There are six stone steps to the door.

7. The alternative side door entrance is 850mm wide.
8. All rooms on the ground floor and first floor have either fitted carpets or loose rugs which cover most of the floor area. The Oak Staircase is bare timber, and this area can be prone to sound echoes (the Oak Staircase isn't currently in use while work is being carried out).
9. There is plenty of natural light throughout the house and there are electric table lamps and pendant lights in the rooms. The light level does vary throughout the house as blinds are used to manage the amount of light in the house to protect the collection from light exposure.
10. Currently some spaces are closed due to conservation work taking place. We will gradually open more of the house and update the Access Statement accordingly.
11. So that social distancing can be maintained, we will be operating a one-way route through the house so that visitors won't need to pass each other. There are some narrower corridors and doorways, but none less than 750mm.
12. All rooms on the ground floor have adequate space for turning a wheelchair in.
13. There are visitor seats with armrests in the principal showrooms, and these are disinfected daily.
14. Visitor Experience volunteers are present in the larger rooms on the ground floor to enable social distancing and to share the history of the house.
15. When we have sufficient volunteers, the basement is also open to visitors. This is accessed via a stone staircase which has a turn in it. It has a handrail on the right-hand side. Visitors then exit the basement via stone steps at the end of the courtyard (also with a handrail) and emerge in the courtyard. If you would prefer not to explore the basement, you may exit via the side door into the courtyard.
16. The Pioneer Rooms are open on the First Floor, which provide a space for you to learn more about the Massingberds and their connections whilst taking a moment to pause on comfy sofas and armchairs. This space is accessed via a staircase, and we do not have a lift.
17. The Visitor Toilets are in the courtyard, as mentioned above. There is a toilet in the basement (down 12 stone steps) that has baby changing facilities. Please ask a member of staff for assistance.
18. Visitor Experience volunteers are positioned around the house to share the Massingberd story. In the event of us not having enough volunteers available on a particular day, they will offer an informal 'walk and talk' guided tour.
19. There is no audio guide but we have a portable induction loop – please ask a member of the team if you wish to use it.
20. To protect the carpets, we ask that visitors use the Gunby wheelchair or wheeled walkers only.
21. It takes 20-30 minutes to explore the ground floor, and visitors may pause to rest at any point in one of our Visitor Chairs. If a visitor does not wish to tour the house with the rest of their group, there are benches just outside the entrance where they can sit and enjoy the gardens. It takes about 45-60 minutes to explore the whole of the visitor route. Please note we are having work done on the Oak Staircase, and from time-to-time areas may be closed or cordoned off for your safety.

## Gunby Hall – ground floor visitor route



### Food and Beverage

1. It is approximately 500m from the car park to the F&B Kiosk. There is an accessible drop-off point approximately 30m from the F&B Kiosk.
2. There is a tarmacked driveway topped with loose gravel that leads to the courtyard, and there are cobbles in front of the F&B Kiosk. There is a small lip at the threshold to the F&B space.
3. There are two wooden outer doors that are secured open by hooks at all times during opening hours and two glass inner doors which are usually wide open. A member of the team will assist you if you need help. The entrance is 143cm wide.
4. There is no alternative route into the F&B area.
5. There are no soft furnishings and there can be an echo in the space – we don't have a hearing loop yet.
6. The area is well lit by natural light and some pendant lights from the ceiling.
7. There are no corridors. When the side room is open there is a non-slip metal ramp, and the doorway is 107cm wide. The indoor seating space will re-open when Government guidance allows.
8. There is only one floor in the F&B Kiosk, and it is level. The floor has been painted with non-slip paint.
9. There is plenty of space for wheelchairs turning at the counter and in the courtyard seating area, but only a turning circle of 1200mm around one of the four indoor tables – please ask a member of the team if you need any assistance.
10. Due to coronavirus restrictions, the staff currently serve visitors from behind the Perspex screen and stand behind the counter. They will put on a mask and come around the counter to assist you if you need any help.
11. There is no induction loop.
12. The limited takeaway menu is not available in Braille, but the team will be more than happy to describe to you what is on offer.

13. We offer drinks/food to take-away in disposable cups or eat in with crockery. We do have large handled cutlery and mugs – please do ask if you'd like to use them.

## **Retail**

1. There is no retail offer at Gunby Hall at present, but guidebooks are available at the Visitor Reception or the F&B Kiosk.

## **Grounds/Wider Estate**

1. There are various routes across the estate – to the Ice House Pond (1 mile), Bratoft Manor (4 miles) or Monksthorpe Chapel (7 miles)
2. These are all self-led, and the routes are available to download from the Gunby website
3. The terrain on these walks is uneven, and a mix of grass paths through fields, farm lanes and chalk paths
4. The landscape is relatively flat, with a gentle incline as you return to the hall and gardens
5. All gates on the route are wooden kissing gates – all of our stiles have been replaced
6. There may be livestock in some of the fields, depending on the time of year (usually March to November)
7. Currently there are no benches on any of the routes
8. Dogs on a lead are welcome
9. Traversing the fields and paths with a wheelchair or electric scooter is not recommended
10. Please ask the Welcome Team at Visitor Reception for more information on the walks

## **Contact details for more information**

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