

Dapdune Wharf Access Statement (see P.5 for towpath access)

Wharf Road
Guildford
GU1 4RR
T: 01483 561389 (office hours only)
E: riverway@nationaltrust.org.uk

Introduction

Dapdune Wharf is on the River Wey Navigation which runs from Guildford to the Thames. It is the place where barges for the River Wey were originally built. The visitor centre here is at the heart of the Navigation and comprises a collection of small buildings with displays and interpretation about the Navigation and a restored barge. Boat trips, guided walks and various events are also a regular feature at the Wharf. Visitor facilities include a car park, tea room, WCs and a ticket/information kiosk. The Wharf lies near the centre of Guildford on a short narrow strip of mainly grass-covered land slightly sloping down to the river.

Mobile reception is good at Dapdune. In case of emergency, please ring 01483 561389 for the property office, or at weekends, please use the Thames Lock number: 01932 843106 for all emergency calls.

Assistance dogs are welcome and non-assistance dogs are welcome on leads around the Wharf.

Arrival & parking facilities

The site lies behind Guildford Cricket Ground on Woodbridge Road – the A322. There are brown signs at the junction of Woodbridge Road and the A25, coming from the east, and where Onslow Street joins Woodbridge Road, as well as the Woodbridge Road junction with Wharf Road, but you have to look for them.

The car park at Dapdune Wharf has two designated disabled spaces at the bottom immediately next to the visitor reception. The car park surface is firm with a top layer of loose gravel. It is possible to use a wheelchair from the parking area to the Wharf, which is grass, with firm paths, or to the tearoom.

WCs

There is an accessible lavatory in the WCs by the Barge Building Shed - a property map is available from Visitor Reception in the car park. There is also an accessible lavatory in the tearoom.

The accessible WC in the toilet block is right hand transfer and measures 105 x 200cm. The WCs (both accessible and non-accessible) have automatic hand driers, and there is no fluorescent lighting.

Visitor Reception

Visitor reception is a hut with a window, located at the bottom of the car park. Ambient noise can sometimes make it difficult to hear, so please ask the member of staff or volunteer to speak up if necessary.

We have one manual wheelchair available for loan – currently there is no need to book but do ring the office in advance if you prefer.

There is a welcome leaflet which is given out at Visitor Reception which contains a map of the Wharf.



The Wharf

The entrance to the Wharf lies approx. 15 metres from Visitor Reception across a hard-gravelled car park surface. The access is through a gate, measuring 105cm wide. Before entering the gate, the stable is on the left, and has level access. Once through the main entrance to the Wharf, the smithy is viewed from the outside, Reliance barge has a ramped entrance with rails on either side, the Gunpowder Store has level access. The Carbide Store has a slightly sloping access but is level at the doorway and the Barge Building Shed has level access.

Dapdune Belle, the electric boat, has two steps down from the car park and two steps onto the boat itself. We currently do not cater for wheelchair users in the trip boat, but this may change in the future.



Much of the Wharf is only accessible over grass. This is uneven in places and reasonably firm - although obviously less so in wet weather conditions. The path to and on the Island is very uneven and is steep in places. There is a bench outside the Carbide Store, picnic tables on the island and in the tearoom garden.

Catering

The tearoom has two entrances: from the car park, there is a ramped entrance or three steps. There are double doors which are generally both open in warm weather, but volunteers in the tearoom will happily close them if asked if the weather is cold. This allows access to the ordering area, but there are two steps down into the seating area. The second entrance takes you round the side of the building, on a path, to the rear door which allows access to the seating area.



There is plenty of natural light in the upper part of the tea room, which is on two levels. The entrance (higher) level contains the serving counter, the WCs and the goods for sale. The lower area (two steps down) has the tables and chairs and some interpretation material and a noticeboard. The lower level is wheelchair accessible via an external route.

The counter in the tea room is small and is 900mm high. Volunteers and staff will assist visitors with trays as required. There is good space between the tables.

Contact details for more information

T: 01483 561389

E: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk

8 February 2017

Reviewed September 2022

Map of the Wharf

Finding your way around

We hope you enjoy your visit. Please ask if there is anything we can help you with. Start your visit in:

The small **stable** contains an introductory exhibition. There were other stables on this wharf and along the Navigations for the carthorses making local deliveries. They were not as large as the horses used for pulling the barges. Later, this building housed the boiler for the steam chest which you will see next to the Barge Repair Shed.

1 The **smithy**, originally the nail store, has now been reconstructed and now contains a forge and large bellows.

2 The black box next to the smithy is a **tar chest**. Tar was mixed with a coarse fibre such as goats' hair or hemp and used to fill the small gaps between the planks of a barge to make it watertight. This process, known as caulking, was a skilled task. The mixture had to be heated to exactly the right consistency in order for it to be applied and then it had to be worked into cracks, often no more than 1mm wide.

3 The **steam chest** was used for heating oak planks so that the wood became pliable and could be bent and twisted into shape – looked at the curved timbers on *Reliance*. This small chest was used to bend smaller pieces of timber for repairs to barges. There used to be a larger steam chest next to the Barge Building Shed for steaming the huge timbers needed to make a new barge.

4 Barges needing maintenance above the waterline were brought into the **Barge Repair Shed**. If work was required below the waterline, the hulls were pulled onto the graving dock where *Reliance* now stands.

5 **Reliance**, an original Wey barge, was fitted out here in 1931-32.

6 The **capstans** were used to pull barges out of the water onto the graving dock. This was usually done by four men. The short poles are for display, longer

poles were originally used. There is a model of the capstans being used in the Gunpowder Store.

7 The **Gunpowder Store** is where you can find out more about the cargoes carried on the river, learn about pulleys and have a go at tying a nautical knot. This room is part of the oldest building on the Wharf, built in the mid 17th century as a store for gunpowder, but has had many uses since then. From 1894 to 1964, when barges were built and repaired at Dapdune Wharf, it was used as a store for paint, ropes and sheets. As you can see from the floor and doors, paint was also mixed in here.

8 **Wharf Cottage** was built in 1894 for the Edwards family, who moved to Dapdune from the Kennet and Avon Canal to build and repair Wey Barges. This cottage is privately occupied and we ask you to respect the privacy of the residents.

9 **Perseverance IV** was the last in the line of Stevens' barges called Perseverance. She was built at Dapdune from 1934 to 1937. The National Trust took ownership of Perseverance in 2010 and is currently fund raising to ensure her future.

10 The **crane** has been here since at least 1935. It was possibly used for unloading carbide. The rails originally ran along the whole wharf frontage.

11 The **Carbide Store** was built in 1916 to store carbide that was brought from London and used mainly as a fuel for lighting.

12 The **Carpenters' Shed** is currently used as a store. It was previously the sail loft.

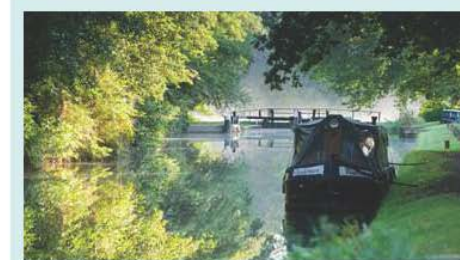
13 The **Barge Building Shed** is where the huge Wey barges were built. The shed is now used to house workshops, visiting school groups and temporary exhibitions and is open when possible.

14 The rotor from a **Francis Turbine** originally powered Town Mill in Guildford, one

of the many mills on the Wey Navigations. A modern copy is producing electricity again at Town Mill.

15 **Dapdune Lea** was built in 1894 for Mary Jane Stevens, the sister of William Stevens III. Later, their brother John lived here, who added a balcony so that he could watch the cricket. In 1968 it became the National Trust's Navigations office from where the waterway is managed.

16 **Dapdune Island** is maintained as a wildlife area. You are welcome to explore, picnic on and enjoy the 'island'. The water is deep and there is a strong current around the island so please keep away from the banks.



Exploring the towpath

The Wey Navigations extend for 20 miles from the start of the navigable waterway at Godalming Wharf to the Thames at Weybridge. For most of their length, these historic navigations run through beautiful, tranquil Surrey countryside. Each stretch of the waterway has a different character and there is always something of interest to see.

The best way to get to know the waterway is on foot. You can visit our website at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/riverwey and download our circular walks which take you from one end of the navigations to the other. Our events programme features many guided walks throughout the year.

River Wey Navigations - Towpath Access Statement

Wharf Road
Guildford
Surrey GU1 4RR
T: 01483 561389 office
T: 01932 843106 24 hour emergency contact at Thames Lock
E: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk

Introduction

The towpath runs adjacent to the navigations – part river, part man made cuts – for 20 miles from Godalming north to Weybridge where the River Wey joins the River Thames. The towpath was constructed to allow a man and horse to tow a barge and this is the criteria used for maintaining the towpath. The majority of the towpath is a permissive route and not a right of way. The towpath is generally flat with slight undulations but with steeper ramps where towpath meets highway crossings and lock chambers. Surfacing is very variable from bounded surfaces in residential area to soil path through the countryside that does become wet and muddy after rain and during winter. Tree routes and ruts may be encountered. There are gates at various locations for safety reasons at road crossings or where stock is kept in fields. Treat the towpath as a rough country path.

The towpath is used by pedestrians and by permission cyclists. Expect the path to be busy in urban areas. Horse riding along the towpath, with the exception of one short bridleway section, is not permitted. Some areas of the towpath may be suitable for children's buggies and wheelchair access including mobility scooters but great care must be exercised in their use due to the variable nature of the ground and condition of the surface.

Mobile reception is generally good along the 20 mile length of the towpath but reception does vary depending upon your mobile service provider. The Thames Lock telephone number (above) should be used for all emergency calls.

Assistance dogs are welcome along the whole 20 miles but be aware the towpath does run through agricultural fields in places where stock may be present at any time of year. All dogs should be kept on a lead through such fields.

The bank of the navigation running along the edge of the towpath can vary due to erosion caused by floods and animal access into/out of the water. Great care must be taken if travelling close to the waterside edge of the towpath. There is no handrail and out of urban areas no artificial lighting.

Arrival & Parking Facilities



There is no specific National Trust car parking for access to the towpath for general visitors with the exception of Dapdune Wharf in Guildford which has a separate access statement. There are numerous access points along the 20 miles of towpath emanating from local streets and local authority parking areas and the rights of way system where it crosses the towpath.

WCs

There are no National Trust public facilities along the 20 miles of towpath.

Visitor Reception

There are no visitor facilities for the towpath along the 20 miles of towpath.

Catering

There are no National Trust catering facilities along the 20 miles of towpath.

Retail

There are no National Trust retail facilities along the 20 miles of towpath.

Contact details for more information

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E: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk

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Map

A basic orientation map can be found on panels along the towpath at various locations. A leaflet containing the same map can be provided from the property office on request.

The pictures below provide examples of the nature of the towpath and its surface at different locations. The pictures are purely representative and do cover all types of conditions you may encounter and experience





