

Beningbrough Hall, Gallery and Gardens Access Statement

Beningbrough Hall, Gallery and Gardens
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Introduction

Welcome to Beningbrough Hall. Due to the current pandemic, the National Trust are following government guidance, which means we have made changes to how we open the site to visitors. Please read the following updated access statement to learn more about the site and what is currently available to visitors.

The main house, gallery, garden are all very accessible spaces due to the even terrain, the hard surfaced paths and lift access in the house. The parkland paths can be quite uneven and wet/muddy in winter. The upper floor of the stables is the only area not accessible by lift but provision is made to make accessible any exhibition on display up there through an Ipad available from reception on the ground floor.

Mobile phone reception is variable depending on which provider you use and your location on site. If you have a serious emergency we advise you to contact a member of staff or volunteer immediately either at the hall, restaurant or admissions. If this isn't possible then you could call the emergency services directly, otherwise you could try 01904 472027 for the property office.

Dogs are welcome both within the surrounding parkland and within the more formal grounds and are required to be on short non extendable leads at all times and dog walking leaflets are available from the main reception. Dogs are not permitted within the Walled Garden, within the restaurant building or the Adventure Play Area. Assistance dogs are welcome throughout the whole property including the hall, shop, Brew House Cafe and Restaurant. A dog water bowl is also available at reception, outside of the main restaurant and outside of the Brew House Cafe.

The light levels in the house can be quite low in some rooms due to conservation restrictions and although accessible to most wheelchairs, some of the historic showroom are quite narrow, with tight turning circles.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

There are three main access routes via the public highway to the property. All three routes are sign-posted, though the route from Linton-on-Ouse through Newton-On-Ouse village is not currently well sign-posted (being addressed with Highways). Head for Newton on Ouse village and the entrance to the estate is at the end of the main Cherry Tree Avenue. Coaches or larger campervans should enter via the Exit route as a historic archway at the can limit access to tall vehicles.

There are speed ramps on the entry and exit roads with a speed limit of 20mph.

There is a designated area for disabled parking in the main car park which provides space for approximately 13 cars. These spaces have hard standing (tarmac) and the nearest are 5-10 meters from the main entrance. The hall is then another 80 meters approx. from the main entrance.

Cycle racks are located outside the admissions area.

In addition to the hard standing disabled parking spaces, there are some other spaces close to the main entrance that are gravelled. In wet weather however this surface can become soft.

Visitors are welcome to use their own wheelchair or electric scooter on all outdoor paths (the house is not suitable for electric scooters due to the tight turning area from the lift areas and other walkways). As the paths are a mixture of stone paving and thin, compact gravel, and are all level, it makes for very accessible access. There is just one grass bank in front of the house that we advise visitors not to use wheelchairs or electric scooters on. To access the lift in the house which takes you to all three floors, there is a short (approx.10metres), slightly inclined path to the lift door.

If all the hard standing parking spaces are taken, visitors can be dropped off at the main admissions entrance.

Toilets

The toilet block adjacent to the Brew House are the only toilets currently open and are located near to the Wilderness play area. The accessible toilets have a grab rail, emergency pull cord and is lit by a mixture of sensor-activated and natural light. Alongside a purpose-built baby change room, the disabled toilet is equipped with a baby change unit to allow users to change able-bodied children. Access to the toilets is over a coarse gravel pathway which will shortly be flagged. At present the gravel may be difficult to navigate with a wheelchair.

Visitor Reception

There is level access in and out of Reception, which has stone flags to the floor as well as a carpeted area. The entrance doors are 820mm wide and open outwards. There is always a staff member in Reception who can assist with the door if required.

The reception desk is 700mm high and staff circulate freely to greet visitors.

There is plenty of natural lighting and the area is also well lit with artificial lights and no fluorescent bulbs.

There is a window seat and a variety of chairs available, including two with arm-rests.

House

The House is approximately 300 metres from the Visitor Reception and Car Park area.

The main carriageway to the House is flat and wide. It is slightly gravelled but has no cobbles or obstacles to navigate.

The main entrance to the House is on your left as you approach from the main carriageway. There are 10 steps, each of which is 100mm high, to ascend before reaching the front door.

The front door is manually opened and opens inwards. The width of the entrance is 310mm. A secondary door can be manually opened if any extra width (620mm) is needed for entering. There is always a staff member or volunteer on the door who can assist if required.

There is an alternative lift entrance to the House which is located in the east courtyard. Upon approaching from the main carriageway, the lift entrance is signposted (under the Clock Tower) to the left, down a sloping path. It is 10 metres to the lift entrance. The lift is currently restricted for wheelchair users and users with limited mobility only. Outside of the lift is a sign with a button. We ask all visitors wishing to use the lift, to press the button for assistance. This will enable a member of the welcome team to come out to meet you. They will be able to help you get the most from your visit.

The lift entrance is 1.9 metres high and 0.8 metres wide. The lift can be summoned by pressing the call button to the left of the lift door. Due to the nature of the historic building and our evacuation plan, we do not permit electric scooters within the hall. Manual and motorised wheelchairs can be accommodated providing they can comfortably fit within the lift and can safely negotiate through the lift lobbies on each floor.

The Entrance Hall has a double vaulted ceiling and as a result echoing can occur.

The House is primarily lit by natural light and so areas can be quite dark on bad weather days. For conservation purposes, only a limited amount of natural light can enter the House, although there is low-level spot lighting in some of the show rooms.

The House comprises of three floors of which part of the ground floor and all of the 1st floor are currently accessible to the public. All floors can be accessed via the main staircase – each step is 170 mm high and there are 32 steps on the first staircase. The current exit from the first floor exhibition is down the servant staircase, which comprises of a wooden spiral staircase. There is no natural light in this space, so staircases are lit by electric lighting. We also have members of the team positioned at the top and the bottom of the staircase.

The lift also travels to all floors; and therefore provides access to all areas which are currently open to the public. In the event of a fire evacuation, the lift can still be used.

There are no corridors in the House with a width of less than 750mm. The narrowest point in the House is on the ground floor, where an entrance to the left hand closet is 770mm wide.

Although there are window seats in many of the spaces, we are not currently encouraging visitors to sit here due to Covid changes. As an alternative, there are sturdy plastic or leather bucket chairs, with arms, in each of the spaces for visitors to use. These will be cleaned in line with the enhanced hygiene instruction three times a day.

The number of volunteers in the house does vary on a daily basis, but there is always a minimum of four staff members on duty at any time, covering all floors of the House.

There are currently no toilets in the house. The closest toilets are those located behind the Brew House Café, which include accessible toilets with emergency chords, baby changing facilities and toilets.

There are no guided tours of the interior of the house.

Mobility scooters are not permitted in the House, as their large turning circles make navigating certain areas, for example the lift lobbies, difficult if not impossible.

Catering

The restaurant and Brew House both offer counter service. Access to the restaurant is along a level compacted gravel carriageway whilst the Brew house is accessed via the cobbled laundry courtyard. Both offer step less, level access though doors are not automatic. Staff will be on hand to assist with entry and exit.

Staff are on hand to assist with choices and carrying refreshment trays if visitors require it.

The circulation space between tables can be quite tight, especially when busy, and the chairs are quite heavy to move. Staff are available to identify a space/remove a chair to allow wheelchair access, whatever help the customer needs.

Large handled cutlery, curved cutlery, double handled mugs and straws available are available

The restaurant is located between reception and the Hall and has level access.

The Brew House is located in the laundry courtyard. Accessed via cobbled

The Brew House also has an accessible toilet and an accessible baby change facility.

Retail

There are three entrances to the retail shop, the widest of which is 100cm. There are no steps and the tiled floors are level throughout.

The till desk has a lowered section of just over 700mm.

There is good natural lighting and no fluorescent lights.

There is circulation space of 700-1000mm between the display stands and staff are happy to assist with accessing hard-to-reach items or notifying visitors of prices.

Garden

Maps are available from Reception showing accessible routes around the garden. All hard path surfaces are marked on this; these include a mixture of paving slabs, compacted gravel and also cobbles in the Laundry courtyard. There is a slight gradient leading up from the Italian border towards the South lawn.

Steps from this path lead into the East Formal Garden but these can be avoided by entering this area from the other end, adjacent to the south steps of the House.



Other paths within the gardens include woodchip, gravel or grass routes. These are mainly level, with no steps or gates. There is a small grass bank to the south of the House which is unsuitable for wheelchairs or buggies; the South lawn can however be reached by a more gentle gradient at either end of this bank.

There are benches (with backs and arm rests) in most areas and also a shelter with conservatory-style wicker seating in the east formal garden.

The property guidebook includes a section on the gardens, and staff or volunteers working in the gardens are also happy to help with any questions – they can be identified by their badges or branded workwear (National Trust).

A variety of herbs are grown in the walled garden and the double border is also designed as a sensory experience.

There are raised ponds in both the walled garden and east formal garden and a natural pond within the American garden.

A ha-ha with a sudden drop runs the length of the southern edge of the gardens.

Contact details for more information

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