

Coughton Court Access Statement

Coughton Court, Nr Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 5JA

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Introduction

1. Coughton Court is a Tudor mansion set amongst gardens on the flood plain of the nearby river Arrow. Whilst the general ground level does not have any steep inclines the historic house show rooms are on different levels (no lift) and the garden paths are gravelled rather than concrete/tarmac.
2. General mobile phone reception is good for calls and emergency calls across the networks though rarely strong enough for data or internet calls.
3. Assistance dogs are welcome in the house and grounds. We allow dogs in the car parks and across the wider estate walks and footpaths but not in the formal gardens around the house or in the house itself.
4. There are lakes, streams and a fast flowing river in and around the gardens, often without modern barriers such as railings. In the house we may ask that large bags be left with a volunteer in the entrance hall for the duration of your house visit.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. The site is easy to find and clearly signposted on brown signs from the busy A435 road.
2. There are 3 low (75mm) speed bumps on the main drives entering and leaving the property.
3. There are 20 designated spaces for disabled visitors in the main car park. These are all within 25 metres from the visitor welcome building.
4. The car parks are a mix of compressed gravel and grass. Designated parking area for disabled visitors use both gravel (12 spaces) and grass areas (8 spaces)
5. Due to the compact nature of the site we do not have a transfer vehicle. There is a drop off point for disabled passengers in the private Throckmorton car park next to visitor reception.
6. During busy period (weekends, school holidays and bank holidays) we use a field, adjacent to the grassed car park as overflow parking – also grassed.

WCs

1. There is an accessible toilet in the main stableyard opposite the restaurant.
2. The accessible toilet is 2.2 metres by 2.6 metres
3. The accessible WC has both left and right hand rails
4. There are no changing places facilities suitable for adults. A baby change station is situated next to the disabled toilet in the stableyard.
5. This area is largely lit by artificial lights using fluorescent bulbs.
6. All of the WCs (both accessible and non-accessible) have automatic hand driers and fluorescent lighting.

Visitor Reception

1. Visitor reception has a stone floor throughout.
2. The centre's entrance is via a gentle ramp from the outside.
3. The door is 800 mm wide.
4. The entrance door is manually opened and staff/volunteers are inside and can assist with opening the door if required.
5. There are no transaction desks or barriers before entering the property – staff work in the open space of the welcome centre.
6. The area is well lit by natural light from a wall of windows, supplemented by a mix of halogen/LED spot and fluorescent bulbs.
7. Reception has a number of chairs without arm rests and 2 armchairs with armrests
8. There is an induction loop available at the payment point (till)
9. There is no induction loop at the membership recruitment desk
10. 3 manual wheelchairs are available for loan. Please call the property in advance to book them.

House

1. The house entrances are approximately 80 metres from the visitor reception and 100 metres from the car parks.
2. The surface of the paths to and outside the house are gravel.
3. Entrance to the house is via wooden shallow ramps to avoid the raised threshold of the large door.
4. The entrance door is manual opening and is 95cm wide and it opens inwards. Staff/volunteers assist with opening the door if required as they are just inside the front door.
5. Clearance for the saloon through side entrance door is 115cm wide.
6. There entrance hall and downstairs passageways and upper tower room where there are no soft furnishings may cause sound echoes.
7. The historic house windows mean we rely on electric light – predominantly LED bulbs in the original antique fixtures – supplemented with modern standing lamps and display spotlights.
8. The means of access to the upper floors is by staircase only – the cantilevered stone staircase has a central carpet runner and historic metal balustrade with wooden inlay handrail.
9. There are narrow corridors and doorways on the first floor into the tapestry dressing and bedroom (also steps) and from the top landing into the tower staircase.
10. There is space to turn a wheelchair easily in each room (requirement of 1500mm diameter circle) though many of the landings and corridors are not suitable for this.
11. Georgian and Victorian seats are available in each room for visitors to sit on – few have armrests.
12. There are volunteers in approximately 50% of rooms on most days.
13. There is a volunteer WC in the house (can be used by visitors on request if urgent) but no accessible toilets in the house.
14. We have volunteer house guided tours on some open days but no induction loops.
15. A video tour of the property is available on an iPad.

16. The sharp turns and narrow corridors make Coughton's historic house unsuitable for most motorised assistance vehicles. Smaller scale electronically powered wheelchairs can access the ground floor (entrance hall, corridors, Lady Lilian's room and the great saloon).
17. There is a quiet area where people can sit if they don't want to do the same amount of the visit as other members of their group in Lady Lilian's room or in the saloon –both on the ground floor.

Food and Beverage

1. The surface of the paths to and outside the cafe are gravel.
2. The café entrance is approximately 20 metres from visitor reception and 40 metres from the car parks.
3. Entrance to the café is via wooden shallow ramps to avoid the raised threshold of the outer door.
4. The entrance door is manual opening, and is 1.5 metres wide and it open outwards. Staff/volunteers assist with opening the door if required as they are just inside the servery.
5. The café room floors have no soft furnishings which may cause sound echoes.
6. The historic windows mean we rely on electric light – predominantly LED bulbs.
7. The means of access to the upper floor is by staircase only.
8. There is space to turn a wheelchair easily in each room (requirement of 1.5 metres diameter circle) though many of the landings and corridors are not suitable for this. The counter height is 850mm.
9. Circulation space around the tables is less than 1.2 metres. Please call the property in advance to discuss any access needs.
10. Till points have induction loops.
11. Menus are not routinely available in large print and Braille.
12. We do not have large handled cutlery or double handled mugs, but straws are available.

Retail

1. The shop entrance is approximately 30 metres from the visitor reception and 50 metres from the car parks.
2. The surface of the paths to and outside of the shop are gravel and a small area of brick paving.
3. Entrance to the shop is level.
4. The entrance door is manual opening, and is 1.2 metres wide and opens outwards. Staff/volunteers assist with opening the door if required as they are just inside the front door by the till.
5. In addition to the large windows and natural light we rely on electric light – predominantly LED bulbs and display spotlights.
6. There is circulation space of 900mm between the display stands
7. The till points have an induction loop
8. Staff will assist reaching down items to view if they cannot be reached by customers.
9. Staff will assist with telling visitors the price of items.

Garden

1. A map of the garden showing gravel paths round the garden is given out to all visitors at visitor reception. All areas without paths marked on the map are lawned areas.
2. There is a route round the garden avoiding any steps, stiles or other difficult areas for people with mobility difficulties although all paths are gravelled and the surface can be affected by recent weather conditions (eg. large puddles obscuring the surface following heavy rain)
3. Paths have gravel surfaces.
4. The vast majority of the gardens are on the level flood plain of the nearby river with any gradients on paths very gentle/shallow. There are no steps on the main gravel paths.
5. The walled garden has a gate that opens at 12 noon on most days and closes at 5pm – once opened it is locked into place until closed.
6. There is currently no interpretation in the garden.
7. Garden benches are available for public use throughout the gardens.
8. The gardens include a bog garden, lake, ponds, streams and are bordered by a river.

Contact details for more information

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