

## Lavenham Guildhall Access Statement

The Guildhall of Corpus Christi, Market Place, Lavenham Suffolk CO10 9QZ

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### Introduction

- The Guildhall is an early 16<sup>th</sup> century timber framed building set in the Market Place of a medieval village.
- Mobile reception at the property is fair. There is no Wi-Fi available for public use.
- Assistance dogs are welcome throughout the property. Dogs on leads are permitted in the Visitor Reception area and outside in our small courtyard garden where there is a tearoom seating area.
- There is a circular route around the property which has a steep staircase. Under normal circumstances visitors with mobility problems can use the return stairs which are less steep although we are now implementing a one-way system due to the current restrictions.
- Wheelchair users can access the ground floor and tearoom but due to the age of the staircase we are unable to have a stair lift. There is a virtual 3D tour of the property presented on a laptop which is available to view at Visitor Reception – please ask to view it.
- Access is possible to the upper level of the garden through the tearoom.
- Currently exit from the garden is across the dye garden lawn and then out through the back gate where the path is brick paved.



Lavenham Guildhall



Main visitor entrance

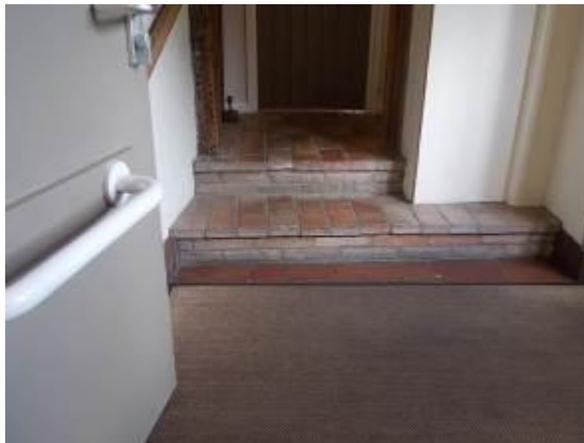
### Arrival & Parking Facilities

- The Guildhall is centrally located on the south side of the Market Place. There are brown signs from the High Street and good signage from outside the village.
- The Guildhall does not have a dedicated car park, but there is limited parking in the Market Place, and a small public car park is situated behind the Angel Hotel approx.150 yards/138 meters away. Alternatively, there is free parking throughout the entire village,
- Cycle parking rails are available in the Market Place.

- The path outside the Guildhall is of York stone slabs. There are three dropped kerbs along the front of the Guildhall to allow access.
- Visitors with disabilities can be dropped off outside the Guildhall entrance. Visitors enter and exit through the door which is almost central in the Guildhall range and has a sign outside advertising opening times. There is a small threshold which most wheelchairs can access (see photo above).

## WCs

- There is an accessible toilet behind the reception area which has an electronic alarm fitted. Entrance to the toilet from the Guildhall is down two steps (see photo below) but there is level access available from the tearoom.
- The accessible toilet measures 59 x 118 ins/1.5m x 3m and is right-hand transfer.
- There are no adult changing facilities, but a baby changing unit can be found in the accessible toilet. There is an electronic hand dryer and hand towels.
- The accessible toilet has an automatic light. The floor is of quarry tile construction and can be slippery in wet weather.



View of steps leading down to the accessible toilet

## Visitor Reception

- The visitor reception area has a 1 metre space around the displays to allow for wheelchair access. It has a brick floor, and a good level of both natural and artificial light is maintained.
- There is a small threshold into the room (see photo, top). The door is left open except in bad weather, in which case it is manually opened by lifting a latch. Staff will assist in opening the door when necessary.
- The reception desk 37 ins/94cm high, with a lowered section for wheelchair users 30.5 ins/37cm. Staff are happy to come around the counter if visitors are unable to reach the counter, and the PDQ machine has a long wire to stretch to any level and allows for contactless payment.
- Please ask at the reception desk if you need a chair to sit down.
- There is an induction loop fitted at the reception desk.
- There are no wheelchairs provided at the property as access to the first floor is not possible.
- Visitor reception staff have a virtual 3D tour of the building with both photographic and audio elements available for visitors who cannot manage the stairs to the upper floor.

## Guildhall

- Access to the Guildhall is from the Market Place, through the visitor reception area (see above). The entrance door opens inward and is 38 ins/97cm wide. It is left open except in extreme weather conditions. Staff will assist with opening doors if necessary.
- There are no carpets in the display rooms, though coir matting is laid in some of the five rooms upstairs. All other floors are either brick or oak boards. The timber frame of the building prevents any sound echo.
- The hall is lit with fluorescent tubes while all other areas of the display rooms have track and spotlights. A portable ramp gives access over a large oak beam (8 ins/20cm) between the introductory room and hall (see photo below). Staff are happy to put the ramp in place but if left in situ the ramp becomes a trip hazard as it stretches out a short distance into both rooms. There is good natural light in all rooms.
- The hall has a porch leading off with two small steps up. There are reproduction Tudor dresses which visitors can try on, as well as tools used in the medieval cloth trade.
- Off the hall there are steep, but solid, steps down to the cellar, which has no wheelchair access. We would not recommend visitors with mobility difficulties descend these stairs.
- Access to the five rooms upstairs is via a very old, solid, steep oak staircase (see photo below), with good handrails on both sides and a grab rail at the top.
- In usual times there are benches in the hall and at least one chair in each of the rooms upstairs that visitors may use. These have currently been removed for covid safety. Please ask at Visitor reception if you need a chair to sit down.
- All the display rooms have large banners that introduce characters from the Guildhall's history. The text on the banners is 28 point or above.
- Powered wheelchairs can access the ground floor, but large mobility vehicles cannot be accommodated inside the property.



Beam between introductory room and main hall



Main staircase showing handrails both sides

## Catering

- The tearoom can be accessed either from the Market Place (see photo below). There is a threshold of 4.5 ins/12cm. A portable ramp is available which staff will be happy to put in place. Both doors are left open except in extreme weather. The floor throughout is of brick.
- The counter is 36 ins/92cm high with no lower section for wheelchair users. The PDQ card machine has a suitably long cable and accepts contactless payment.
- During winter months/cold weather, entry from the Market Place is made from the door to the left of the main entrance, in order to keep warmth in. This door is narrower and has a threshold about 2 ins/5cm high, with no ramp available. There is also a high oak step between this door and the tearoom entrance. Visitors who need wheelchair access should ask staff who will be happy to open the main doors.
- There is good natural light from both front and back of the tearoom. The main seating area has a chandelier and the counter is lit with spotlights.
- The till has an induction loop fitted and a large-print menu is available on request.
- There is an outside seating area for customers from the tearoom, accessible from the main building. Chairs at tables can easily be removed to allow wheelchair users to get close. The tearoom operates a counter service.



Threshold at Tearoom entrance from Market Place

## Garden

- The courtyard garden is enclosed on all sides. There are three different levels and the surface is brick paving throughout, with step edges laid in different coloured bricks. Wheelchair access is possible to the top level, via the tearoom. One area is set aside specifically for tearoom customers. This area has an Armillary Sphere sundial in the centre.
- From the upper level, there are two steps down, with a central hand rail (see photo below). From here, a second set of two steps (no hand rail) leads to the lower level

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where there is seating and a large hazel tree that provides shade in hot weather. From the lower level there is a short pebbled path leading to an area with an old fire engine, and the village lock-up and mortuary. Although level, this area is very narrow.

- Most of the plants are labelled and staff at the reception desk keep a list of all those currently planted.
- Currently exit from the garden is across the dye garden lawn and then out through the back gate where the path is brick paved.



Courtyard garden showing steps up with hand rail

## Contact details for more information

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## Plan of property

