

## Hardy's Cottage Access Statement

Hardy's Cottage  
Higher Bockhampton  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 8QJ

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### Introduction

1. The cottage is situated 700 yards from the car park and is accessible only by footpath and bridlepath, which is very uneven. The cottage is surrounded by a cottage garden and kitchen gardens on a slope, and the cottage is accessed by shallow gravel paths through the flower beds.
2. Mobile reception at the site is poor. In an emergency, it is best to go straight to the kiosk at the entrance, where a member of staff is usually stationed. Otherwise speak to a member of staff or volunteer inside the cottage. A First Aid kit is kept inside the cottage.
3. Assistance dogs are welcome and dogs are allowed on leads into the garden and shed, but not into the cottage.
4. As the house has no overhead lighting or heating, the light levels are low, especially in poor weather. This also means that there is a contrast in light levels when you first enter. The house can be very cold in cold weather. As we constantly have a wood fire burning, it can be slightly smoky in the main room to the left (The Parlour).

### Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. Unfortunately, there are no brown signs from the A35. Follow signs to 'Higher Bockhampton/Cuckoo Lane' from the A35, and then follow white fingerposts to 'Hardy's Cottage'.
2. There is a Disabled Parking spot outside of the Visitor Centre (20 yards up a ramp). There is also further Disabled Parking at the cottage (30 yards from the reception), although this needs to be arranged by speaking to a member of the National Trust team at the Visitor Centre upon arrival.



3. The surfaces of the Disabled Parking at the Visitor Centre are tarmac with a hogging ramp to the Visitor Centre. The parking for the cottage is Wareham gravel (a clay, gravel and sand mix), with a gravel and sand unmade track leading down to the reception. The track is very uneven.
4. Unfortunately, there is currently no transfer vehicle.
5. When you ring 01305 262366, we will be able to inform you if all spaces are booked for the cottage. If they are, there is a drop off point in front of the cottage reception kiosk.
6. It is essential that all cottage parking and drop offs are arranged with a member of the National Trust team at the Visitor Centre upon arrival. As the access to the cottage for the drop off and booked parking is along a Bridlepath, it is essential that drivers drive slowly and considerately, at a maximum speed of 10mph.
7. The 'Accessible route' to the cottage from the Visitor Centre is an uneven Bridlepath and can become deep sand during dry weather. This is not owned by the National Trust or Dorset County Council, although both make efforts to level/resurface the most worn areas regularly.



## WCs

1. There is an accessible toilet at the Visitor Centre.
2. The Accessible WC is 1.55m x 2.16m.
3. The Accessible WC is right-transfer.
4. There is no Changing Places facility. The nearest facility is at Dorchester Library & Learning Centre, Charles Street, Dorchester, DT1 1EE.
5. The WCs are well lit with fluorescent bulbs.
6. The WCs all have paper towels and have fluorescent bulbs.

## Visitor Centre

1. The building is timber-framed with large glass windows and laminate floors. The roof of the exhibition space has sound absorbing boards built in.
2. The approach to the Visitor Centre from the car park is back along the track leading to the car park. It is a tarmac track leading to a hogging footpath leading up a gradient of 15 degrees to a level forecourt (all laid with Wareham gravel – a clay, sand, gravel mix). There is a disabled parking space at this point where the track meets the footpath leading up to the Visitor Centre.
3. The entrance doors are 1600mm wide.

4. The front doors are power-operated, double doors, and operated by a push button on the left, 5 feet from the door. They open outwards, but not as far as the operating button. Staff and volunteers are based in the shop, just within the doors and can assist, if required.
5. The large windows ensure lots of natural light in the exhibition and café space, although it is a little darker in the gift shop. The gift shop and information panels are lit with fluorescent spotlights. The toilets are lit with fluorescent tubes.
6. There are many chairs available in the café, without arms, and one wicker chair in the window seat, with arms.
7. There is no induction loop available at the Visitor Centre.
8. There is no induction loop available at the till point.
9. We have no regular staff or volunteers with fluency in British Sign Language.
10. Trampers (all-terrain mobility scooters) are available for hire from the Visitor Centre. There is no charge, but users must be members of Countryside Mobility (£2.50 fortnight membership/£10.00 annual membership). Please ring 01305 251228 to book Trampers.

## Visitor Centre Catering (independent of the National Trust)

1. The counter height is 830mm.
2. Staff will assist as required. Please let staff know if you wish to be seated, instead of queuing, to be served at the table.
3. Some of the tables are close together and there is not circulation space between all of them of at least 1200mm.
4. There is an induction loop microphone at the till point.
5. Menus are not available in large print, and not in Braille. Please ask the catering staff to read out the menu choices if required.
6. There are no double handed mugs or large handled cutlery, but straws are available.

## Visitor Centre Retail

1. There is circulation space of 1200mm between the display stands.
2. The till points do not have induction loops.
3. Staff can assist reaching down items to view if they cannot be reached by customers.
4. Staff can assist with telling visitors the price of items.



## Cottage Visitor Reception (Kiosk)

1. The Visitor Reception at the cottage is a small kiosk, sat in by a member of staff or volunteer.



2. There is an incline of 10 degrees up to the entrance gate, however the area from the front gate to the kiosk is level. The path is fine gravel.
3. The reception desk is 930 mm high. There are clipboards available for people to use if they cannot reach the desk. There is also a small amount of retail inside the kiosk. Staff can pass customers merchandise from inside the kiosk, to look at, and inform them of prices.
4. The visitor is standing outside as they address the member of staff or volunteer within the kiosk. Here, there is natural light. The inside of the kiosk is lit by a fluorescent light.
5. There are no induction loops on the reception desk.
6. We do not have any volunteers or staff who are fluent in British Sign Language, although we do have a Braille guide available in the cottage, which can be borrowed on request.
7. We do not currently have any wheelchairs available at the cottage.

## House

1. The car park and Visitor Centre are 600 yards from the cottage. The main bridlepath linking the two is an unmade private road. This is made of gravel and sand and is rutted. The sand can become deep in dry weather. The cottage disabled parking (must be booked upon arrival at the Visitor Centre) is 30 yards from the front gate, or disabled visitors can be dropped at the front gate as they pass.
2. The paths from the Visitor Entrance are Wareham gravel (a sand, gravel, clay mix). The path can become covered in leaves and mud in places in wet weather and autumn.
3. The entrance to the cottage is a central door. The doorframe is relatively low. There is no cill, step or lip to the door.
4. The entrance door is manual and inward-opening, but left open.



5. The entrance door is 76cm wide.
6. All main rooms lack soft furnishings, apart from the beds. The floors are stone-flagged in the downstairs Parlour and Kitchen, and rush matting on the floor in the downstairs Office. The upstairs Bedrooms have wooden floorboards. The ceilings are all low, and so there is not excessive echoing.
7. The rooms are all lit with natural light. However, the windows are small and the rooms become dark in bad weather and winter. There are some artificial lights on the stairs, in the bread oven and in a corner of the parlour.
8. The first floor is accessed by 10 steep stairs with a hand rail. The height of the hand rail is 90cm and the steps are 22cm deep and 22cm high. There is a virtual tour on a laptop, available on request, for those who do not or cannot climb them.
9. There are two narrow doors on the first floor. The door from the Parents' Bedroom to Hardy's Bedroom is 60cm wide and the door into the Sisters' Bedroom is 72cm wide.



10. There is space to turn a wheelchair easily only in the Parlour and in Granny's Kitchen.
11. All rooms have seats that may be used by all visitors. There are chairs with arms in the Parlour and the Parents' Room.
12. There is always a volunteer in the Parlour, and then usually a second at the bottom of the stairs or in Granny's Kitchen (dependent on volunteer numbers).
13. There is a single Staff WC in the cottage, which may be used in emergencies on request.
14. There are no formal tours.
15. There is a Braille guide which contains the information found in the Cottage Handbooks.
16. There are no restrictions on access for powered wheelchairs or powered mobility vehicles inside the House but the rooms are very small.

17. There are no designated quiet areas. In the summer, the house is usually very busy and noisy. However, in January, February, March, April, May, October and November there tend to be quiet places around the house. These are subject to visitor numbers and movement. There are some chairs and benches in the garden and a garden shed, which tends to be quieter when we are open.
18. There is no catering at the cottage.

## Garden

1. The garden is a typical cottage garden with shallow gravel paths through the flower beds in the central garden and grass lawns and paths bordering the vegetable garden. The orchard is accessed separately to the property and has mown grass paths around the trees, with a Wareham gravel path leading from the lane gate to the woodland gate. There is a sharp incline on the path up to the woods. There are bee hives in the orchard, behind a paling fence.
2. There are gravel paths which lead from the kiosk to the cottage. The path around the left hand side of the garden remains wide even in summer with the growth of plants either side.



3. The paths between the flowerbeds are all shallow gravel. The paths around the flower beds are mown grass. There is a brick path up to the shed (with no handrail), which can become slippery when wet or icy.
4. There are 10 degree gradients on the paths leading up from the reception kiosk through the garden to the house.
5. There are no steps in the garden.
6. There are gates into and out of the orchard and garden. These are left open during opening hours.
7. There are chairs and tables at the bottom of the garden. There are backless benches in the flower garden, next to the shed and in the orchard overlooking the house.
8. There is a working water hand-pump in the garden.

## Shed

1. The shed is accessed by laid-brick paths from the main garden. It is 20m from the Cottage.



2. The door is left open during opening times.
3. The shed floor is 8cm above the outside ground level.
4. The door width is 94cm
5. There are no soft furnishings, but there is little echo.
6. There is minimal natural lighting from a small window and the open door. The room is lit by a single fluorescent tube. The room is quite dark.
7. There are benches, without arms, for visitors to sit on. These are handmade from wood and can be unstable due to the uneven floor.
8. There are currently no regular volunteers in the shed.
9. The written information for the shed is available in the Braille guide, available from the cottage.

## Contact details for more information

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