

## Max Gate Access Statement

Alington Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 2AB

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### Introduction

1. Situated in a quiet residential area off the main road (A35) on the outskirts of Dorchester, Max Gate is a red-brick Victorian house designed by the writer Thomas Hardy. It is a three-storey house with surrounding garden.
2. There is reasonable mobile phone reception across the property. If visitors have a problem whilst at the property they should call the property number shown above.
3. Assistance dogs are welcome and other dogs are welcome in the garden on leads.

### Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. There are some brown signs off the main road, including one on the roundabout immediately by Max Gate, but the site can still be hard to find. If using Sat Nav the postcode to use is DT1 2AJ.
2. There is no car park. Parking is on the street outside and along Came View Road, which is adjacent. The street outside is 80 yards from the front door of the house. The reception point is just inside the front door. With prior arrangement, eg by phoning in advance of arrival, visitors with disabilities can be dropped off at the front door.



## WCs

1. There are no accessible toilets
2. There is one outside toilet with an ordinary electric light bulb and one toilet inside the house, on the ground floor, with both natural light and an ordinary electric light bulb.
3. The doors of both toilets open inwards. The width of the inner toilet door is 65cm The width of the outer toilet door is 72cm.
4. There are no automatic hand-driers.



Entrance to outside toilet

## Visitor Reception

1. The room has a bare wooden floor (n.b. a fitted carpet is due to be laid in this hallway room in March 2016)
2. The entrance door is up two steps. There is a side entrance door on the left side of the house which can be opened on request and which has a wooden ramp in place up to the level of the threshold step (low gradient). There is a tarmac route to this side door from the front door.



Front entrance door



Side entrance door

3. Both entrance doors are manual opening and open outwards. Staff/volunteers can assist with opening. The main entrance doors are 1.16m wide and leads into a porch area. There is then an inner door, 94cm wide. The side door entrance is 94cm wide.

4. The Reception desk is inside the hallway. It is 74cm high. Staff/volunteers will come round to talk to anyone who cannot see over or reach up to the desk and there is there a clipboard to use to write on if they the desk cannot be reached.
5. The area has low natural light and the ordinary electric ceiling light means that the area is not brightly lit – very much as Thomas Hardy had it originally.
6. There chairs available with armrests.
7. Are there are no wheelchairs available for loan.
8. There is no induction loop.

## House

1. There is a tarmac driveway from the entrance gate to the front door of the house. The paths around the house are a mixture of tarmac and grass with paving slabs.



2. The kitchen on the ground floor, the bedroom on the first floor and the two attic rooms have wooden floors without carpet.
3. The rooms are lit with a mixture of natural light and ordinary electric bulbs. The north facing rooms can have low levels of natural light and consequently are sometimes not brightly lit.
4. There are two upper floors, each accessed by a staircase with handrail. There is no lift.
5. There are no corridors or doorways less than 750mm apart from the door to the toilet on the ground floor. The doorways to the attic rooms have low headroom.



Attic room doors



6. There is space to turn a wheelchair easily in the Dining Room but all other rooms are either quite small for turning, or having furnishings which make turning harder.
7. There seats for visitors to use around the house, some with armrests.
8. On some days there are volunteers in some of the rooms, but most rooms are un-stewarded.
9. There is one WC in the house. It is not accessible. The width of the door is 65cm
10. There are no guided tours, audio guides or virtual tours. Braille and large print information sheets are available from the Reception desk.

11. The Drawing Room and Dining Room on the ground floor are good rooms in which to sit quietly.

## Catering

1. There is a facility in the Kitchen on the ground floor for self-service refreshments – tea, coffee, squash, cake and flapjacks. Payment is on a donation basis, by cash left in a bowl.
2. The counter height is 98cm. Staff/volunteers at Reception will assist visitors as required.
3. Paper cups are used for tea and coffee, glasses for soft drinks.
4. There is a kitchen table, with 6 chairs, in the centre of the Kitchen for the use of visitors.
5. A 15 minute film plays, on a loop basis, on a television in the Kitchen, showing enactments of scenes from Thomas Hardy's Under the Greenwood Tree.
6. There is no induction loop in the Kitchen.

## Retail

1. There is a small retail area in the Kitchen consisting of two sets of shelves. Items to be bought are taken to the Reception desk for payment.
2. Reception staff/volunteers can assist on request with reaching down items to view if they cannot be reached by customers, or tell visitors the price of items.
3. There is no induction loop in the Kitchen.



Retail shelves

4. There is a small second hand book shop in the stable block to the left of the house. The tarmac courtyard in front of the stable block is rough in places.



## Garden

1. The gardens are around three sides of the house and are a mixture of grass lawns and flower beds.
2. There is one step on the route around the gardens.



The paths are a mixture of 'crazy paving' as in the above photo, paving slabs laid on grass, and earth paths with wood chippings.



3. There are no substantial slopes or gradients on the paths, and no gates.
4. Is there no interpretation in the garden, other than plant labels.
5. There are tables and seats in the garden, some with armrests.
6. Are there no water features.

## Contact details for more information

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