

# Coleridge Cottage Access Statement

Georgian Cottage and former home of poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, located on the main street of the village of Nether Stowey at the base of the Quantock Hills in Somerset.

## Contact Details

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## Introduction

1. The property is located on the main street of the village and there is no footway directly in front of the cottage, but there is on the opposite side of the road. The footway on the near side leads directly to the entrance of the cottage.
2. Mobile phone reception at the cottage and in the village is very poor. The site is fairly compact and any emergencies can quickly be brought to the attention of staff and volunteers, who can call the emergency services from the office landline.
3. Assistance dogs only are welcome throughout the site.
4. Light levels can be low in the building, especially in autumn and winter and on dull days, as there is minimal electric lighting in the main interpretation rooms. There are large windows in each room which provide natural daylight.
5. Steps are the only means of access and exit from the house so visitors need to be able to manage these independently.
6. Any visitors using a foldable wheelchair or visiting with a baby buggy/pram will need leave them in the main downstairs hallway and collect them after their visit around the cottage.
- 7. There are no induction loops in the Cottage.**
8. The cottage interpretation includes some sudden sounds. These include recordings of a crying baby, footsteps, and singing on the historic landing beside the bedroom, which is also audible from the Second Parlour and the upstairs rooms. There is also a motion sensor poetry recitation in the Interpretation Room, which activates when the visitor steps into the room.
9. There is a one-way route throughout cottage and the garden, in line with government guidelines to enable social distancing. Please follow this route. You will be given clear instructions on your welcome to the property. This route includes a steep spiral staircase leading to the upper floor and a staircase descending back down to the ground floor. There is also a slope that is uneven and can be slippery when wet that will lead you to the exit of the property. Visitors need to manage these independently.

## Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. Coleridge Cottage is signposted with a brown sign in both directions on the A39 from Bridgwater to Minehead. There is also a small brown NT oakleaf sign near the Post Office in Nether Stowey, visible to those entering the village from the Bridgwater end. The Cottage itself is located on the main street. A hanging sign is easily visible to visitors approaching from the East and a sign is also visible approaching from the West on Lime Street, on the wall of the next door property, directing towards the car park.
2. There is no dedicated car parking, disabled or otherwise, at Coleridge Cottage. Visitors can park in the car park for the Ancient Mariner pub, which is located directly opposite the property which the pub kindly allow us to use. Alternative car parking is available on the street and in the village car park on Castle Street, which is 500 yards away. The National Trust is not responsible for either of these car parks.

## WC

1. There is **one** WC for visitor use, which has one step at the entrance. The floor is tiled and the room is lit with fluorescent lighting. This WC is not accessible.
2. There are no adult or baby changing facilities.

## Entrance and Welcome

1. Entrance to the site from the street is via three stone steps onto a pedestrian cobbled path, which visitors are required to walk on for approx. 5m before reaching the front door, which is accessed by a further two stone steps. There is no ramp provision. There are handrails in place at both sets of steps.
2. The front door is 870mm wide and is left open during open hours. The inner lobby door is also left open unless the weather is wet or it is very cold. If the inner door is closed, visitors are required to manually operate the latch to open it.
1. The whole of the ground floor is tiled or carpeted. All internal doors are wooden and remain open during the day.
2. There is no reception 'desk' in the typical sense – Visitors are welcomed in the small courtyard outside the property. Please ensure you maintain 2-meter social distancing from this point.
3. The width of the door into the Welcome Parlour is 780mm, therefore this room is unsuitable for wheelchair access.
4. There is an Access Folder in the Welcome Parlour, which contains information and images for those who are unable to access the upstairs rooms. Braille and large print guides are also available.



Steps from street to front cobbles



Steps up to the front door

## Ground Floor

1. There are six rooms accessible to visitors on the ground floor. These are: Welcome Parlour, Second Parlour, Sara's Kitchen, Shop, WC, and Tearoom. The flooring in each of these rooms, including the hallway between them, is tiled, with the exception of the shop, which is carpeted. There are limited soft furnishings in each room so hard noises will produce echoes. The doorway into the Second Parlour is 800mm, the shop door is 810mm, therefore wheelchair

access should be possible into these rooms.

2. The doorway into Sara's kitchen is 730mm wide. Regretfully, therefore, this room is unsuitable for wheelchair access.
3. Due to the narrow corridor, (700mm wide), unfolded wheelchairs cannot access the tearoom and non accessible toilet from the house. Wheelchair users may be able to access the garden via the steep uneven slope from the back gate into the garden to then take up the one-way route around the garden. The pathways are grassed so are uneven. If you have any further questions please contact us ahead of your visit.
4. There is limited artificial lighting on the ground floor to create the atmosphere that Coleridge would have known. Rooms are lit by natural light and low impact mains operated lights. Light levels can be low if it is an overcast day, and during autumn and winter.
5. It is not guaranteed that a member of staff or volunteer will be present in each room, but as a rule at least the Welcome Parlour and Tearoom will be staffed as a minimum.
6. There are two staircases for accessing the first floor. The visitor route suggests that visitors use the spiral staircase in the Second Parlour to ascend. This consists of 11 steep, winding wooden steps, each approximately 220mm high. There is a handrail. Visitors with limited mobility are encouraged to use the second staircase (nominally the 'down' staircase), located between the shop and Sara's Kitchen. This consists of 12 steps to a landing, and then a further four steps around the corner. The steps are approximately 150mm high, and are carpeted. There is a wooden bannister.
7. As the cottage and its rooms are small, to ensure a good visit for everyone, we have to limit the number of visitors in each room. This may require us to ask visitors to wait at times.

## **First floor**

1. There are three visitor rooms on the first floor. These are: Bedroom, Exhibition Room, and Interpretation Room.
2. The floor of the Bedroom and the landing area outside it are wooden. The Bedroom floor has a slight slope to it. The other three rooms are carpeted.
3. The upstairs rooms are not generally staffed.
4. There is a fire door separating the Interpretation Room from the Bedroom and Exhibition room. This door will remain open to minimize touch points and to maintain ventilation.
5. There are three wooden steps up to the fire door, each approximately 200mm high. A handrail is in place.

## **Catering**

1. Visitors enter the tearoom through a doorway that is approximately 770mm wide. The door is always open during the day and is low level so taller persons are to mind their heads.
2. There is a step change in the level of the tearoom floor. The primary area consists of brick tiles and there is a step of 120mm onto the higher level. The surface changes here to cobbles. Visitors will need to navigate this step if they wish to access the garden. Due to this, this area is not accessible to wheelchair users.
3. The roof of the tearoom is constructed of corrugated plastic which allows a lot of natural light. There are two electric lights above the serving hatch, although these are only used if natural light levels are low.
4. There are no soft furnishings in the tearoom and hard noises will echo.

5. There is a serving hatch with a fixed counter 1.4m from the ground. This is where you will place your order and be asked to sit down at a table. Just under the hatch there will be a serving shelf where a volunteer/staff member will leave your order and call you to collect it.
6. There is limited seating as it's a small area and tables are spaced 2 metres apart.
7. What we have available is on the chalk board that is hanging next to the serving hatch. Please choose from that board.
8. Straws are available but there is no large handled crockery or double handled cups.
9. We may not be able to open the tearoom daily so please check the website before your visit.



Tearoom step and level change

## **Retail**

1. The shop is entered from the main cottage hallway and the door is always left open.
2. Display cabinets primarily line the walls, and there is one central display table with at least 700mm circulation space around it.
3. The counter is fixed at 900mm high. The shop is not staffed so please ask the volunteer in the hallway to assist them.
4. We may not be able to open the shop daily so please check the website before your visit.

## **Garden**

1. The garden is divided into two areas: the cottage garden and the wildflower garden.
2. From the tearoom, the path leading into the garden is cobbled and steep.
3. The cottage lawn can be accessed by steps directly outside the tearoom or by level access at the top of the cobbled path.
4. The wildflower garden is at the top of the cobbled path. A narrow path is mown into the lawn to guide visitors around the garden.
5. There are 3 audio posts in the cottage garden run on solar panels, accompanied with benches each one of these will have a sanitizer available to use.
6. There are no gates or barriers to navigate once visitors are in the garden.
7. The Garden Room is accessed from the cottage lawn. The wooden door is kept open if the weather is dry, otherwise visitors need to open it inwards with the latch. Internally the floor is wooden. There are no soft furnishings to absorb noises and the room is lit with spotlights.
8. The Well Courtyard is accessed directly off the Tearoom and has level access. The floor of the courtyard is brick and has a slight incline. Our well is closed whilst we have a one way route in place.



Garden access from Tearoom



Level access to cottage lawn

## Exit

1. Exit from the property is via the back garden gate following the one way route. The path leading down to the gate is steep and uneven and can be slippery when wet. Take care when navigating the exit. There is a handrail to one side.
2. Once you exit the gate you are stepping almost onto the main road through the village. Take care when stepping through the gate and whilst crossing the road.
3. Please close the back gate on leaving the property.



Wildflower garden with mown paths



Exit path with gate



closed off

**Date April 2021**