

# Knightsayes Access Statement

A large Victorian country estate in rural mid Devon, showcasing the eccentric design work of William Burges. Home to the only 'Garden in a Wood' in existence and one of the finest spring gardens in the South West, along with a fully restored kitchen garden, extensive woodland and parkland.

## Contact details

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## Points to note

- There is reasonable mobile phone reception across most of the site except within the house and stables.
- Assistance dogs are welcome throughout the property. There is a water bowl in the stable courtyard which is refilled regularly or can be filled on request.
- Light levels in the house are kept low to protect the collection. This is compounded by the fact Knightsayes is a Victorian property, so the interior decoration of the house is naturally dark, and light levels are very low even in the summer.
- There are 3 manual wheelchairs available to loan from visitor reception for use in the gardens and grounds
- There are 2 manual wheelchairs available for loan from the front desk in the house for use inside. We request visitors swap from outdoor into indoor wheelchairs if accessing the house.
- The parkland and gardens are on gradient which means there are a number of steep slopes and paths
- A steep free route around the formal garden is marked on our welcome map.
- There is 1 fenced pond and 1 unfenced pond in the parkland. There are a further three unfenced ponds in the gardens.

## Arrival & Parking Facilities

- There are brown signs from the A361. The entrance is signed and the main car park is located behind the stables, further up the driveway from the house.
- There are speed bumps approximately 1.1.5 cm high on the driveway between the house and the stables.
- Do not follow sat nav when visiting the property as this will direct you to locked barrier.
- The main car park surface is gravelled and disable parking is partially marked.
- From the nearest accessible parking spot in the car park to visitor reception is approximately 40 meters.
- There is a large parking area in the bottom level of the car park for those with access issues and for families with young children. This area is the shortest distance from the visitor reception. This is partially lit.
- Cycle racks are available alongside the stables.

- It is possible to arrange to drop off visitors directly down at the house, if the designated spaces are full, by prior arrangement with the visitor reception team.
- There is an overflow car park adjacent to the driveway which is used on high days and holidays, and for special events.
- There is an eclectic buggy which can take 8 people regularly between the Visitor Reception and the forecourt of the house. This is not accessible for people who cannot transfer from their wheelchair. The buggy does not service the rest of the car park.
- There is another car park available in the parkland, adjacent to the Heathcoat Cricket club near the main entrance to Knightshayes. This is a flat car park with a gravelled surface. This car park is not lit.

## WCs

- There are WCs in the stables, including a right-hand transfer accessible WC. There are no adult changing facilities but baby changing facilities are available here. All the WCs have automatic hand driers, lino and plastic wall surfaces, with fluorescent lights.
- There are more opposite the front of the house, with accessible WCs in both the ladies and gentlemen's WCs.
- There is baby changing available in the ladies and disabled toilets at the stables, and in the ladies opposite the house.

## Visitor Reception

- Visitor reception is in a wooden building is right next to the car park and adjacent to the main Stables.
- The entrance is through a double door which is approximately 66" (168cm) wide. Staff and volunteers can assist with opening the door if required.
- The floor through the Stables is made of uneven cobbles or stone, there is a runner in place in reception. The flooring in visitor reception area is mostly wood and stone, with full length windows to provide natural light. Fluorescent lighting is used in the winter.
- The reception desk is approx 36" (91cm) high.
- There is no induction loop.
- There is a flat route through the plant centre for wheelchairs unable to manage going over the floor in reception.

## Route to the House and Gardens

- There is a flat path from the front of the stables across the lawn
- The path down to the kitchen garden on the right has an approximate gradient of 1:8 and runs from the stables lawn. There is a bench located at the top of the path down to the kitchen garden gate.
- The path to the left towards the house and formal and woodland garden is approximately 100 metres long and takes around 5 minutes at a moderate walking pace. It is a gentle slope with a gravel surface, and on a slight camber. There are benches located regularly along this walk. The route is lined with trees which can create a 'dappled' effect on the path if the sun is out

## House

- The immediate forecourt in front of the house is only used by pedestrians and our transfer vehicle. The forecourt is level and gravelled, the gravel is regularly raked.
- The entrance to the house is through the smoking room. There is a mobile ramp available fitted to allow access. The door opens inwards and is manually opened.
- The smoking room has low lighting levels, in spite of being artificially lit. It is wise to take a moment to allow your eyes to adjust to the low light levels.
- Occasionally, an alternative entrance in the East Wing is used, this door has a temporary ramp available as necessary.
- The floor surfaces are mostly carpeted, with a wooden floor in the Great Hall and some passages.
- The lighting is a mixture of fluorescent and LED and kept to a low level to maintain the atmosphere and to protect the collection.
- There is an introductory film lasting about 7 minutes, which is located in the gentleman's room, just off the Great Hall. The film is not subtitled, but there are transcripts available on request. There are a number of chairs in the smoking room.
- Seating is available throughout the house if required, please ask the room guides for assistance. There is usually someone in each room.
- The ground floor route is fully available to wheelchair users, though there are some pinch points in the house due to its layout which may make access a little difficult at time.
- We are able to accommodate some mobility vehicles at the discretion of the house staff, though an indoor manual wheelchair will always be offered as an alternative.
- The first floor is accessible via steps. The stairs in the main hall are approximately 2 m wide polished wood. There is a handrail.
- There is a second flight of stairs elsewhere in the house. This is 1.5m wide and carpeted. There is a handrail.
- There is no lift in the house.
- Rucksacks and large bags are required to be left in the entrance area in a cupboard which is monitored at all times.
- If you require use of a quiet space, please indicate this to one of our room guides who will be able to find a suitable area for you.
- There is a photo tour of the first floor available in the smoking room
- There are Braille and Large print guides available.
- Mobility scooters are allowed on the ground floor only

## Formal and Woodland gardens

- There is access to the Formal and Woodland Garden from the house via the Conservatory Tea Room, down a ramp, or via the smoking room
- There is a mixture of grass paths and gravel paths throughout the garden. All the gravel paths are made up of 6mm quartzite chip.
- There is a step free hard path throughout the garden that is suitable for wheelchairs and buggies (marked on map), but due to the nature of the landscape, the path is rarely flat, and is steep in places.
- Most areas in the garden are accessible via step free-routes

- There are some stepped areas throughout the Garden in the Wood
- The Formal Garden has 2 ponds, one located in the Pool Garden and another in front of the house. Both are unfenced.
- There is a ha-ha at the bottom of the front lawn, which has a 6 foot (1.8m) drop into the field beyond, with only a small catch fence.
- There are a number of benches located throughout the garden.

## **The Kitchen Garden**

- The main entrance into the kitchen garden is through a large, heavy iron gate, which is propped open. There is a smaller, waist high self-closing gate within the frame. This opens inwards into the garden.
- There are is a secondary entrance to the middle terrace, accessible via a step free route along a path following the outside of the west wall. This gate is also a heavy iron gate propped open with an inner self closing gate.
- The elevation of the kitchen garden means that it is on a slope to catch as much sun as possible, so there is a steep walk from the bottom to the top.
- The paths are all made of concrete and are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair in all areas- though not for two to pass one another
- There are a couple of benches throughout the garden, set back from the path.
- The upper level of the kitchen garden is accessible via steps inside the garden, or via a path that runs outside the west wall.
- There is 1 pond in the kitchen garden. It is unfenced.

## **Parkland and woodland**

- There is a recommended route around the parkland and woodland, though much of it is unsurfaced, and the route passes through fields where livestock are likely to be present
- The path in the woodland is roughly surfaced, but is uneven and steep in places.
- There are is one fence pond and one unfenced pond in the parkland.

## **Stables Café**

- The main Café servery has step-free access from the stables courtyard, via a doorway, which is over 100cm (1m) wide. The door opens outwards and is manually opened. There is a slight lip on entry. There is another, narrower entrance into the seating area which has a raised lip, but is ramped.
- There is some outdoor seating with tables in the stables courtyard which can accommodate wheelchair users.
- The counter is 40" (102cm) high. Catering team members are available to assist with service and carrying trays.
- There is an induction loop at the counter.
- Menus are available in standard print and there are large handled cutlery and straws available.
- The floor and wall surfaces are stone and brick and the lighting is fluorescent. The chairs have cushioned seats. There are highchairs available.
- The floor in the seating area dips in the middle towards a drain.
- The stables courtyard is cobbled and sloped towards a drain in the centre.

## **Shops**

- The entrance is level and via the reception area. The floor is stone and the lighting is fluorescent. The doors open inwards and is manually opened
- The doorway is wide enough to accommodate a standard wheelchair width.
- The counter is 36" (92cm) high but staff and volunteers are able to assist with service here and with lifting and carrying goods if required.
- There is circulation space between the tables of around 1200mm and some of the goods on the central tables are reachable by wheelchair users and children. There is space here to use a powered mobility vehicle or powered wheelchair.
- The second-hand bookshop is accessible via temporary ramps outside each door. The doors open inwards

## **Date**

2017