

The Firs Access Statement

National Trust, The Firs: Elgar's Birthplace, Crown East Lane, Lower Broadheath,
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Introduction

1. The property is split between two buildings; the new visitor centre is fully accessible. But the grade 2 listed cottages has low narrow doorways and one steep curving staircase to access the first floor. The pathways to the cottage are gravelled but do slope down towards the bottom of the garden.
2. Mobile reception is good all over the property for most mobile providers. In an emergency the number to call is 01905 333 330 but as the property is small enough the best option is to flag down a member of staff or volunteer with a radio.
3. Assistance dogs are welcome all over the property and the general property policy towards dogs is that they are welcomed everywhere except the cottage and tea-room.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

1. There are brown directions signs from all of the main routes to The Firs.
2. There are 4 designated spaces for disabled visitors in the main car park. They are around 30m from the visitor reception building.
3. All of the main carpark and disabled bays are of tarmac construction, the closer of the overflow car parks is gravel and the further overflow car park is tarmac.

WCs

1. The accessible toilet with an alarm is in the tea-room side toilet block and the non-alarmed accessible toilet is on the opposite side of the visitor centre.
2. The accessible toilet is 1.5m x 2.5m.
3. The accessible WC is left hand transfer.
4. The area is lit with both natural light through a glazed window and fluorescent lights
5. The WCs (both accessible and non-accessible) have automatic hand driers and fluorescent lighting. In addition, both accessible toilets have hand towel dispensers.

Visitor Reception

1. The main reception floor is covered with vinyl tiles and carpet. There are two soft furnished benches in the main area too.
2. The entrance from the car park is a flat tarmac path.
3. The entrance door is a double door but is generally closed for people to open themselves. If we see someone that needs assistance we open the door for them.
4. The lower height of the reception desk is 770mm and the higher part is 1100mm.
5. The area is lit by large floor length windows giving natural light.
6. There are armless chairs, stools and cushioned benches.
7. A manual wheelchair is available for loan with no need to book; there are also three foldable stools for people to take around the site.

House

1. 50m walk from Visitor Centre to Cottage
2. The type of surface on the path outside the cottage is gravel.
3. There is a gentle slope of approx. 10% gradient at one point along the route.
4. It is a level surface to get into the building.
5. The entrance door is manual opening; it is a single door width and opens inwards. Volunteers assist with opening the door if required.
6. All rooms have soft furnishings to dampen the sound.
7. In the front room there is natural light the other rooms are artificially lit.
8. Steep curving staircase to upper floor with handrail
9. There is space to turn a wheelchair easily in each downstairs room
10. There are seats for visitors to use around the house, some of the seats have armrests
11. There is usually one volunteer on ground floor and one on upper floor.
12. No WCs in the cottage.

Catering

1. The tea-room is within the Visitor Centre.
2. The counter height is 930mm but the card machine can be brought down to the visitor.
3. Staff assist visitors as required, visitors can be seated if they experience difficulty queuing and staff will then assist them.
4. There is a 1200mm circulation space between the tables.

Retail

1. Retail is within the Visitor Centre, reception and tea-room area.
2. There is a circulation space of 1200mm between the display stands
3. Staff can assist reaching down items to view if they cannot be reached by customers.

Garden

1. The route round the garden avoids any steps, stiles or other difficult areas for people with mobility difficulties.
2. The paths have gravel and grass surfaces.
3. Slope on the two path in the cottage garden have a 5% gradient
4. There are two gates on the route.
5. There are many benches in the garden.

Contact details for more information

T: 01905 333 330

E: the.firs@nationaltrust.org.uk

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