

# Hartlebury Castle

## Access Statement

### Introduction

Hartlebury Castle explores over 1,000 years of history and is made up of the Bishop's House, the County Museum, and the historic grounds. Hartlebury Castle is committed to widening access and providing for the needs of all its visitors. We constantly seek to improve the quality and accessibility of our site and we welcome feedback from our visitors. The building is Grade 1\* listed, however we have attempted to provide appropriate adjustments for accessibility within legal boundaries and to alert visitors to any access issues which we are unable to resolve.

### Prior to Arrival

- The Castle can be contacted using the following methods  
Post: Hartlebury Castle, Hartlebury, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY11 7XZ  
Phone: 01299 250416 Fax: 01299 251890  
E-mail: [museum@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:museum@worcestershire.gov.uk) or [admin@hartleburycastle.com](mailto:admin@hartleburycastle.com)
- Website: [www.hartleburycastle.com](http://www.hartleburycastle.com) The Museums Worcestershire website ([www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk](http://www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk)) is hosted by Worcestershire County Council using a responsive, accessible design suitable for the wide range of browsers and devices available. It is tested by Shaw Trust to ensure compliance with web accessibility standards WCAG 2.0 AA to meet the varying needs of our audience
- The Castle is situated approximately 3-4 miles from Kidderminster, where main bus and train stations are located. Bus number 303 operates between Kidderminster and Worcester, Monday-Saturday and stops in Hartlebury. The museum is a 15-20 minute walk down hill from this bus stop. For local bus information please phone Diamond 0121 557 7337 or visit <http://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/bustimetable/BusSearch.aspx>
- There is a small unmanned train station in Hartlebury, the Castle is approx a 20-30 minute walk from the station, train times vary.
- The nearest Shopmobility scheme is in Bromsgrove – tel: 01527 837736
- Taxi firms with wheelchair accessible taxis operating in the local area

are Regency Taxis 01562 66666  
P & P Central 01562 825522  
Albany Taxis 01562 823333  
Central Taxis 01562 825522  
Hollands Taxis 01562 824777

### **Arrival and car parking**

- The Castle has two large car parks. The car parks are free and the surfaces are tarmac and rolled Breedon gravel.
- Access to the gravel carpark by car is over a cattle grid, exits from the gravel carpark are sprung gates or kissing gates and lead on to flattened gravel or tarmac paths.
- There are no barriers or gates on the tarmac car park. The tarmac carpark is on a slope and the tarmac is damaged in places. Access to the Visitor Reception from the car park is via a level path of concrete flags running alongside the front of the building.
- Three designated disabled bays are adjacent to Visitor Reception and are clearly signposted. The interior of the bays are 230cm wide and including the hatched area to the right the bays are 366cm wide.
- A disabled car parking space can be reserved by telephoning in advance 01299 250416.
- Rear access to vehicles can be obtained once parked in the designated disabled spaces.
- There is a dropping off point in front of the Visitor Reception door. There is a bench available.
- There are no speed bumps or traffic-calming measures.
- Assistance dogs are welcome in the Museum, Castle and grounds and drinking water can be provided - please ask a member of staff. Non-assistance dogs can be walked in the grounds

### **Main entrance & Reception area**

- Staff can assist you with entry on request, please call 01299 250416 once you have parked.
- The Reception area and welcome desk are lit using bright spotlights and there are large windows and plenty of natural light.
- Just inside the entrance is a thin mat to minimise dirt levels.
- There are automatic double doors to the Reception which are motion

sensitive and slide open.

- The floor is wood parquet flooring and is level throughout.
- Reception is manned 10:00 – 17:00 Tues-Fri and 11.00-17.00 at weekends.
- We have one wheelchair which can be borrowed from Reception for the duration of your visit. The wheelchair can also be pre-booked by calling 01299 250416.
- The Reception desk is 90cm high and is fitted with a hearing loop.
- The Tickenhill Room is located to the right of Reception. There is a hearing loop within the room. There are tables and chairs available.
- Admission prices are clearly displayed above the desk. When it is necessary for a visitor to be accompanied by a carer we will give free admission to the carer.
- A pad and pen are available from Reception if required. A clip board is also available if you are required to fill in any forms.
- The exit leading to the rest of the site is through the Shop. This semi-automatic door is operated by a push button at 84cm height. The door leads onto a shallow ramp with a firm, gravel surface. The ramp has a handrail and low-level lighting.
- There are tactile, braille maps available from Reception on request.

## **Shop**

- The Shop desk is 90cm high with a lower level area 74cm high. It is also fitted with a hearing loop.
- The PDQ/Chip & Pin terminal is mobile and can be moved to suit the customer.
- The display shelves are at a variety of heights from ground level upwards. Some shelves are lit with spotlights, the room also has large windows and lots of natural light.
- Price labels are printed, but not in large print.
- Staff are happy to assist with price enquiries, or to carry or move stock around for you.
- The till display is visible to the customer.
- The floor is limestone slabs and is level throughout.
- When stock is displayed in baskets on the floor we ensure there is always adequate access for wheelchairs.

## **Public Areas**

- The Bishop's House and the Museum are located within an historic building with uneven floors, some low lighting and low ceilings throughout. Some areas of the Castle use automatic audio-visual screens and speakers. We ask that all visitors stay aware of this fact throughout their visit.
- All routes throughout the building are kept clear and free of obstacles.
- Fire exits are clearly signposted.
- The path leading to the castle entrance is both tarmac and flattened gravel with a small shallow ramp at the start.
- It is approximately 150 steps from the shop door to the Castle entrance and 120 steps from the shop door to the Museum entrance with level access.
- Signage throughout the museum is in a clear font, placed at an appropriate height and printed in a contrasting colour (generally white text on a dark grey background or black text on a cream background).

## **Lifts**

- The Bishop's House lift is 138cm depth by 108cm width. The door is 91cm wide, and it is recommended for up to four people standing. It cannot be used for mobility scooters.
- The lift is accessed via narrow corridors approximately 110cm wide which are dimly lit.
- The doors are automatic and open outwards. There is a 30 second delay before the lift door automatically closes.
- The buttons are 100cm from the ground and there is a fixed grab rail at 90cm. The call bell is 108cm from the ground. The buttons have raised numbers and braille.
- The lift will only move when a floor button is continuously held down. The lift will automatically stop if anything falls between the edge of the lift floor and the lift shaft walls.
- Public access to all three floors of the Museum is by either stairs or lift. The lift is made of glass, it has sliding doors and a fixed horizontal handrail at 91cm. The push button controls are at a maximum height of 112cm. The doors from each lift landing into the Museum are all automatic (operated by push buttons) and open inwards.
- Both lift systems feature emergency alarms. The lift landing areas are

fire safe for a minimum of 30 minutes and have been cleared for emergency use by the fire authorities.

### **Bishop's House**

- The entrance to the Castle is accessed by two large stone steps and a small lip on the bottom of the door frame. There are hand rails on either side and the steps are 145cm wide.
- At present there is no ramp available at this entrance. Level access is through the Museum entrance.
- All ground level rooms are on one level. Flooring is variable and uneven in places with wooden floors, flagstones and carpets of different depth.
- The narrowest door in the Castle is 68 cm between the ante Chapel and the Bishop's Study. Staff will be able to assist with alternative routes if needed.
- There is seating available in the majority of rooms in the Bishop's House. We encourage visitors to sit on any seats that are not marked as fragile.
- Exhibitions in the Bishop's House are often reliant on audio visual presentation. Written transcripts of the audio are available in the Bishop's House lobby. The 'talking portrait' screens in the lobby and the Great Hall have BSL/subtitled screens next to them. The Bishop's Study portrait screens have a subtitled version available on the desk.
- Most of the objects on display can be handled by visitors and unless signposted otherwise, furniture can be sat on.
- Audio descriptions and tactile diagrams of a selection of the portraits in the Great Hall are available.
- Some of the portraits in the Great Hall are only accessible to view up close from the symmetrical staircase. There are 18 stairs to the top and 18 down the other side.
- Lighting throughout the building is variable with some rooms being purposely kept darker as part of the immersive interpretation experience. The entrance lobby is lit by natural day light and overhead lights. Some rooms are lit by only single ceiling lights and others are well lit by large windows during daylight hours. The Anglo-Saxon room has low lighting and flickering lights as part of the display. The Dream Room is dimly lit.
- All fire escapes are clearly sign posted. The main staircase is the

evacuation route in the Bishop's House. The lift does not function during a fire alarm. There is a level exit through the Museum.

- A fire evacuation chair is available for all floors, and the lift landings are designated fire safe areas. There is an emergency call point button by each lift door, lit by green light. There is a communication function, which connects to the Bishop's House lobby.
- A number of doorways are fitted with self-closing devices that cause doors to automatically close. The majority of doors in the Bishop's House have door knobs. The First floor lift lobby currently has a heavy door that opens into the corridor and can affect wheelchair navigation. Please ask a member of staff if you need assistance.
- Access to all floors is available via lift.
- There are 19 steps to the Mezzanine floor and a further 10 to the First floor. The stairs have thick carpet runners throughout. There are banisters on either side, which are approximately 20cm wide.
- The stairs are 28cm deep and 16 cm high.

## **Museum**

- Flooring surfaces throughout the museum are various including carpet, linoleum, wood floorboards and concrete. Outside you will find paved, tarmac, grass and limestone floorings. There is a thin floor mat to minimise dirt levels at the main entrance to Reception and the Museum building. Other than that there are no rugs or mats throughout the Museum.
- All bins inside the Museum are an accessible height, they operate by lifting a lightweight lid or with a foot pedal action.
- A variety of seating is available on all floors of the Museum, specifically there are chairs in the Reception area, picnic benches in the Orchard, a long bench in 'Springs, Spas and Holidays' on the ground floor, low window seats in the temporary exhibition space on the first floor and a seating area in the 'Footsteps Through Life' room on the second floor.
- Sufficient lighting is provided throughout the Museum. Lighting levels may be lower in some areas of the Museum for the protection of fragile exhibits.
- There are two staircases in the Museum connecting three floors. Each staircase has a hand rail and landings in between floors. Both staircases are carpeted. Each floor is connected by wooden steps, with

anti-slip nosings and hand rails. The red stairs are 120cm wide, each tread is 17.5cm high and 24cm deep with a 90-97cm hand rail. The green stairs are 120cm wide, each tread is 15 cm high and 26 cm deep with a 90cm high hand rail.

## **Exhibitions**

- Most of the collections are presented so as to be viewable from wheelchair height, however some displays in flat cases may be difficult to view for wheelchair users.
- Only one room of the museum is not accessible to wheelchair users. This is our smallest exhibition room and currently covers the Civil War period. The other 13 exhibition rooms are fully accessible to wheelchair users. Please ask staff to open the fire door (86cm wide) to provide wheelchair access to the two ground floor rooms (Springs, Spas & Holidays and The Schoolroom) which are accessed internally by a small step.
- Interpretation boards are provided for most exhibits. Interpretation and labelling on all new exhibitions is designed with a minimum of 16 point text and generally uses a clear font such as Arial or Calibri. We are currently updating all out older text panels to meet this requirement.
- The Cider Mill is a historic exhibit in its own right and we are therefore unable to make adjustments to the flooring. There are small raised areas at the entrance and exit, the flooring inside is rough earth and cobbles. Please take extra care in this building.
- There is a small lip on the entrance and exit of the Transport Gallery.
- Interactive exhibits, audio interpretation and opportunities to be hands on are provided throughout and where possible have been located at accessible heights.
- We have attempted to include displays which stimulate all senses for example the herb garden provides a variety of smells and textures, there are a number of boxes in various rooms containing replica objects which visitors can touch and use and there is a fountain in the 'Springs, Spas and Holidays' room providing the sound of bubbling water.

## Public WCs

- Lavatories are located on the ground floor of the Reception building, in a separate toilet block opposite the main Museum adjacent to the Forge, and next to the entrance lobby of the Bishop's House.
- The doors are clearly signposted with text and pictorial signs.
- The Reception building houses one male and one female/disabled access toilet. The main toilet block consists of four separate areas - ladies, gents, accessible toilet (unisex) and baby change facilities. The Bishop's House has female toilets with three cubicles, male toilets with one cubicle and three urinals, and one accessible toilet.
- The accessible bathrooms contain a toilet, hand basin and hand dryer facilities. There is adequate room in each accessible bathroom for a wheelchair user to be accompanied. Flooring in accessible WCs is tiled or vinyl. Wall colour contrasts with floor colour.
- Access to the accessible WC in Reception is via a single leaf door, 76cm wide, which opens outwards and to the left. The toilet seat is 48cm high; it is positioned in one corner so that when sitting on the toilet transfer on and off would be to the user's left. There is one fixed horizontal grab rail to the left of the toilet and one hinged support rail to the right of the toilet (71cm high when lowered). The sink is 73cm from the floor. It has a lever operated thermostatic mixer tap. There are vertical grab rails on either side of the sink. There is an emergency pull cord with an audible alarm, there is also a flashing light connected to the fire alarm for individuals with hearing disabilities. There is 1 coat hook and a wide window sill which can be used as a shelf. Total floor area in the disabled WC measures 2.6 x 1.76 metres.
- Access to the accessible WC by the main Museum is via a single leaf door, 93cm wide, which opens outwards and to the left and has a 82cm high horizontal grab rail on the inside. The toilet seat is 42cm high; it is positioned in one corner so that when sitting on the toilet transfer on and off would be to the user's right. There are fixed horizontal and vertical grab rails to the left and rear of the toilet and one hinged support rail to the right of the toilet. The sink is 74cm from the floor and there is a vertical grab rail to the left of the sink. There is 1 coat hook but no shelves. The floor area measures 2 x 1.76 metres.
- Access to the accessible WC in the Bishop's House is via a single leaf door, 86cm wide, which opens outwards and to the left. The toilet seat

is 50cm high; it is positioned in one corner so that when sitting on the toilet transfer on and off would be to the user's right. There are fixed horizontal and vertical grab rails to the left and right of the toilet and one hinged support rail to the right of the toilet. The sink is 73cm from the floor and the vertical grab rail is to the left of the sink. It has a lever operated thermostatic mixer tap. There is an emergency pull cord with an audible alarm, there is also a flashing light connected to the fire alarm. There is a drop-down baby changing table and nappy disposal unit on the left hand wall. The floor area measures 1.49 x 2.16 metres.

- Access to the accessible WC in the Café is via a single leaf door, 86cm wide, which opens outwards and to the right. The toilet seat is 48cm high; it is positioned in one corner so that when sitting on the toilet transfer on and off would be to the user's left. There are fixed horizontal and vertical grab rails to the left and right of the toilet and one hinged support rail to the left of the toilet. The sink is 71cm from the floor. It has a lever operated thermostatic mixer tap. There is an emergency pull cord with an audible alarm. The floor area measures 1.47 x 2.22 metres.

### **Bishops' Table Café**

- The dining area is uniformly lit by large ceiling lights.
- There is adequate clearance around the tables to accommodate a wheelchair.
- Tables are moveable and measure between 75-79cm high. The tables have legs at each corner with a minimum of 61cm gap between legs. The chairs in the Cafe have no arms.
- A large print menu is available, please ask a member of staff.
- Ingredient information is available for all of our products for those with food allergies.
- Service is from the counter, but table service can be provided if required.
- The toilets are accessible through a set of double doors without handles to the right of the counter.

## The Grounds

- There are two routes around the Castle grounds - the Castle Terrace and the Moat walk. There is also a Carriage Circle in front of the Castle and a small coppice at the end of the Moat walk.
- The Castle Terrace and Queen Elizabeth walk have level access past the Museum lobby. There is a sweeping slope outside the Museum entrance. There is a drainage dip at the beginning of the walk. The surface changes from tarmac, to flagstones, to compacted gravel, to stone gravel and short grass. There are two benches available – one on the Castle Terrace overlooking the moat, and one on the Chapel path. There are low walls along the Castle Terrace, and metal handrails on the corner and steep slope by the Chapel.
- The Carriage Circle has level access leading from reception with a circular tarmac path. There are 9 steps, with no handrail, down from the Carriage Circle to the Queen Elizabeth Walk.
- The Moat walk is just under 1km, or 1500 steps and will take approximately 30 minutes to walk. It is accessed from the Castle terrace via 20 steps. The steps have handrails. The steps are part of the historic landscape and are steep and uneven in places.
- The route continues left across the lawn of the Sunken Garden. To access the Orchard Terrace, there are 6 steep and uneven stone steps without a handrail at the far end of the Sunken Garden. These are followed by a wood chipped path.
- There are a further 10 log steps up to the Orchard Terrace. From this point on the walk continues without stairs. There are steep sloping paths and the route is either wood chipped or boardwalk.
- The boardwalk is made of wood with anti-slip grooves in each plank. While every effort is made to keep paths clear of weeds and plant life, visitors are reminded it is a woodland area and trip hazards may occur.
- The walk exits into the Coppice via a one-way, self-closing door. The return route to the Reception building is via the tarmac carpark, following a woodchip slope and 8 uneven stone steps.
- The grass in the Museum Orchard area is cut regularly however the surface of this area is uneven. All outside paths are swept daily.
- The moat and other water-logged areas are not fenced off and can be deep in places. Deep water signs are in place in these areas.

## General information

- Opening Hours:

	Open	Close
Tuesday to Friday	10am	5pm
Saturday and Sunday	11pm	5pm
Bank Holiday Mondays	11pm	5pm

The museum is closed on Mondays. The Museum is also closed between Christmas and New Year and on Good Friday.

- The museum continually monitors, reviews and improves our accessibility.
- The majority of our staff are trained first-aiders, there will be at least one first aider on duty at any time.