

Sudeley Castle and Gardens Access Statement

This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with access needs but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer visitors.

Introduction

Sudeley Castle and Gardens is situated in the countryside on the edge of the Cotswolds town of Winchcombe. As well as incorporating a Grade I-listed castle building dating back to the 1440s, there are gardens, an exhibitions area, a café, shop and an Adventure Playground with picnic area.

- Free parking and accessible parking available
- Free entry for carers with paying disabled visitor
- Accessible entrance and gift shop
- Accessible café
- Accessible toilet at entrance and inside the castle (via exhibitions area entrance)
- Accessible garden route (assistance is recommended due to the terrain)
- Accessible Chapel and Adventure Playground (via ramps)
- Limited access to exhibitions area and Castle Rooms due to stairs. Please ask a member of the team for details.

For more information, please email enquiries@sudeley.org.uk

Pre-Arrival

Details of how to find us are on our website. Our postcode is GL54 5JD which can be entered into Google Maps and other such sites to get directions.

The closest railway station is Cheltenham Spa which is approximately 10 miles away. From the station, buses travel into Cheltenham town centre where you can then get the bus to Winchcombe. The main routes are Stagecoach's W or Pulham's 606 service. Alternatively, taxis are available from the railway station and can be ordered by our Visitor Centre staff.

The nearest bus stop is on Winchcombe's high street named 'Abbey Terrace' which is approximately 1 mile/a 15-minute walk to the Visitor Centre, some of which is up a steady gradient hill. For bus timetables please visit www.traveline.info and input our postcode.

The main entrance is down a narrow lane (Vineyard Street, off the high street) with a weight-restricted bridge (2.5 tonnes). Large vehicles including coaches, minibuses and campervans should enter using our 'exit' gate by coming down Rushley Lane (turn off the bottom of the high street).

Four manual off-road wheelchairs are available to use free of charge during your visit and can be collected at the Visitor Centre. Please phone 01242 604244 to pre-book.

The visitor route around the gardens is only suitable for off-road mobility scooters with chunky grip tyres due to slopes, adverse cambers and loose gravel. Small and low-powered scooters are not suitable for the terrain.

Car Parking and Arrival



Main car park



Castle Terrace accessible parking bays



Sloped access from car park to Visitor Centre

There is ample free parking available on the site by the Visitor Centre. The car park surface is composed of loose gravel lanes and grass verges with a large section of hardstanding spaces directly in front of the Visitor Centre.

Limited mobility car parking is reserved and signposted at the front of our car park. We also have two accessible parking bays at the Castle Terrace if required. Please ask at the Visitor Centre on arrival for further information and access.

Coach parking is available next to the Visitor Centre.

Entrance into the Visitor Centre from the car park is on ground level with no steps and a wide doorway via a slab pathway.

Main Entrance and Visitor Centre



Visitor Centre Entrance



Slight slope from Visitor Centre to castle grounds



Compacted stone path to Castle

The Visitor Centre is where you show your pre-booked ticket (or pay your admission fee) and is on the ground level in the car park with step-free level access, throughout.

Carers receive free admission with a paying disabled visitor. Please book a complimentary ticket online or ask at the admission desk. The carer's complimentary tickets must be presented with their ward's fully paid ticket.

Entrance into the grounds from the Visitor Centre has a very slight slope with no steps or handrail. It is a 1/3 mile walk to the Castle along compacted stone paths with some loose gravel.

The Castle



Access avoiding steps



Entrance to exhibitions area



First set of stairs to exhibitions

Once at the Castle, outside the ‘dungeons’, there is a marked route through the gate to the right to avoid the stone steps.

Our guides and volunteers can be found in and around the Castle and will be happy to assist and answer questions. At present our tablet computers are out of action, but we are in the process of updating and improving the information available for those who cannot access the inside spaces.

Entrance to the exhibitions area is from the terrace. Exhibitions are housed over three floors within the Castle with stairs with a handrail but no lift access. Chairs are located throughout the exhibitions for visitors to rest if needed.



Ramped access to South Hall – entrance lobby to Castle Rooms



Steps to ground floor rooms in South Hall



Steps to South Hall via Knot Corridor

Some of the family’s private rooms are open to visitors including the Library, Morning Room and Chandos Bedroom. Access to the ground floor rooms is by three steps with no handrail. Access and exit from the first floor is via a large, wooden staircase with banister. Unfortunately, there is no lift access within the Castle Rooms. Please ask a team member from within for assistance if required. There is ramped access to South Hall.

A film room is located off South Hall accessed by two steps with no handrail, and with a small step into the film room itself.

The Gardens and Chapel



Grass bank access to Chapel



Loose gravel surface of main garden paths



Steps from Queens' Garden to Ha-ha

Our paths are a mixture of compacted stone, gravel and grass with access ramps in places. Some pathways are uneven so please take care. We have benches throughout the gardens to enable rest when needed.

There are stone steps without handrails from the Queens' Garden to the Ha-ha surrounding it. The top of the Ha-ha is accessible via the grass bank up to the Chapel (see photo above left).

The Chapel can be accessed by stairs with a handrail or via a grass bank to the right of the Chapel to avoid the steps. Once at the top of the bank, please go right and around the back of the Chapel for access. Please note this bank is rather steep and has an adverse camber. The Chapel can alternatively be reached from the Visitor Centre through the 'Ruins to Revival' outdoor exhibition area. The Chapel is accessible using the side entrance on the left of the building which is a ramped entrance. Once inside however, please note Queen Katherine Parr's tomb is by the altar which is only accessible by two steps without handrails.



Ruins to Revival outdoor exhibition



Bridge access to Adventure Playground



Adventure Playground

The Ruins to Revival exhibition is accessible.

Playground

An Adventure Playground with a large wooden fort, slide and zip wire is set in a family picnic area. The Adventure Playground area is accessed by a large wooden bridge – this is accessible to wheelchair users and pushchairs via the ramp. Assistance is recommended due to the lip at the bottom of the ramp and the gradient of the slopes. The fort itself includes ladders and has several levels so would not be recommended

for visitors with limited mobility. The whole area is enclosed with access only via the bridge.

Public toilets

Public toilets are available at the Visitor Centre and at the entrance to the exhibitions area in the Castle, both on ground level.

Limited mobility toilets are located in the Visitor Centre and at the entrance to the exhibitions area and include an emergency pull cord and handrail. Baby changing facilities are available in both limited mobility toilets.

Food and Beverage



Pavilion café



Pavilion outdoor seating



Coffee Boutique
shepherd's hut

The Pavilion café is adjacent to the Visitor Centre and can be accessed via a ramp. Hot and cold food, ice creams, cakes and hot and cold drinks are served. The Pavillion café has a large, covered seating area, outdoor tables at the rear and picnic tables at the front of the building.

The Coffee Boutique shepherd's hut is situated in front of the Castle near to the 'dungeons'. Hot and cold light lunches, cakes and hot and cold drinks are served. It has an outside seating area in front of it. There is also access to the Orangery when available for use in case of adverse weather; access via marked route through the gate to the right to avoid the stone steps.

Dogs and Pets

Regrettably no dogs or pets are allowed in the Castle or grounds, other than assistance dogs. Dogs are welcome in the Visitor Centre and the Pavilion café with a water bowl available.

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