



KNEBORTH HOUSE, GARDENS & PARK

Home Of The Lytton Family Since 1490

Access Statement

Contact

Although every reasonable effort is made where possible to make the House, Gardens and Park accessible to all we are always looking at ways to improve our facilities and where possible to help our visitors enjoy their time at Knebworth House, Gardens and Park.

We welcome your feedback to help us continually improve. If you have any comments please contact us at the address below:

Knebworth House
The Estate Office
Knebworth
Hertfordshire
SG3 6PY

Tel: 01438 812 661
Fax: 01438 811 908
Email: info@knebworthhouse.com

Introduction

Visitors with disabilities are very much welcome to Knebworth House, Gardens & Park. We advise our guests that due to the nature and layout of Knebworth House, Gardens and Park we recommend that those with disabilities are accompanied by an able-bodied carer.

Open Dates/Times

Open dates and times are published on our website: www.knebworthhouse.com and in our leaflet which is available upon request, see contact detail details below.

Pre-Arrival

There are many ways to contact us before you arrive. These include:

- Calling the Estate Office during office hours, 9:00-17:00 on: 01438 812 661
- When calling out of office hours you can ring 01438 812 661 and listen to our voicemail information system and leave a message
- Alternatively you can browse our website: www.knebworthhouse.com
- Send us an email to: info@knebworthhouse.com
- Send us a fax on: 01438 811 908
- Or you can write to us at: Knebworth House, The Estate Office, Knebworth, Hertfordshire SG3 6PY

The management reserves the right to make any changes to facilities offered and to close the grounds and House, or any part thereof, without notice.

During open times there is always a Duty Manager available. Should the need arise and you want to speak with the Duty manager, please contact any member of Knebworth House, Gardens and Park staff (who are identifiable from their blue Knebworth T-shirts, fleece or name badge) and they will radio the Duty Manager on your behalf.

Directions

Grid Reference / Location: OS TL230 224

By Car: Knebworth House, Gardens and Park is near Stevenage in Hertfordshire. Located only 30 miles north of central London and 15 miles north of the M25 we offer the visitor direct access via our private slip road from Junction 7 (Stevenage South A602) of the A1(M). The postcode for the main entrance is SG1 2AX.

By Rail: Frequent non-stop trains run from Kings Cross to Stevenage and takes 30 minutes. There is a taxi rank at Stevenage Station – walking is not recommended.

By Coach: Coaches operate regularly from London Victoria to Stevenage. A taxi is necessary from Stevenage to Knebworth House.

By Bus: There is no direct bus or coach service to Knebworth House, Gardens & Park.

By Taxi: Telephone numbers for local taxi companies

Goldstar	01438 727 277
Parkers	01438 357 111

Arrival & Car Parking Facilities

Car Parking: There is ample *and* free car parking within Knebworth Park during our published open times.

There are two main car parks:

- The Adventure Playground field on your right as you enter the Park through the flag poles. Visitors are welcome to drive up to the low fencing around the playground and park close to the play area offering both easy access and views of the play area. Please note that you will be driving across an uneven field. To the left of Knebworth Fort at the playground is a disabled designated car parking area.
- Located at the entrance to the formal gardens, gift shop, public toilets and Garden Terrace Tea Room. There is dedicated disabled parking which is clearly signposted closest to the entrance and toilets. The surface of the car park is gravel.

Special Event Days: Throughout the open season Special Events are organised within the Park and additional car parking is provided in one of our fields normally the closest to the event. During these times there will be additional staff dedicated to marshalling vehicles and assisting visitors. The car park marshalls are identified by reflective vests. These temporary car parks provide a dedicated area close to hard standing for disabled drivers closer to the event. Please note that this is on grass and some areas may be uneven.

Before, during and after Special Events there may be some disruption to the facilities within the Park. We recommend contacting the Estate Offices in advance of a visit for further information.

Road System: Within Knebworth Park there is a concrete one-way road system. The direction for traffic is clearly signposted. On entering the Park there is one cattle grid. On exiting the Park there is one cattle grid and automatic exit gates which open outwards. A vehicle stopping point is clearly marked to enable the gates to open.

Speed Limit: For the safety of our visitors we operate a 10mph speed limit while in the Park. This is clearly signposted around the road system.

Free Courtesy Bus: A free courtesy vintage bus which has limited disabled access is provided within the Park on Sundays and Bank Holidays between 11:00 and 16:30 to transport visitors between the Adventure Playground and the House and Gardens.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed in the Park only, not in the Formal Gardens, Dino Trail or the House. Dogs must be kept on leads and under control at all times. Assistance dogs are welcome in all accessible areas.

Main Entrance & Ticketing Area

Admission tickets are available from pay points located at the entrance. Visitors receive a free map showing all the amenities within the Park.

Please make the staff aware of any disabled persons and carers in the vehicle as staff are not always aware and do not want to cause offence.

A person with a disability is required to purchase a standard admission ticket. An essential carer of a disabled person is admitted free, by prior arrangement.

Visiting The House

Access to the House is via the formal gardens which has gravel paths and some stone steps. There is a wheel chair route which is signposted throughout.

The entrance to the House is through the garden door which is 144cm wide with a slightly raised threshold. Ramps are available from the entrance hall of the House, should they be required please speak to a member of staff who will put them in place for you. Pushchairs are not permitted to be taken through the House but there is an area in the front porch where they can be stored during your visit. A member of the house staff will direct you to the area

The floors within the House consist of stone, carpet and wood.

The public rooms are situated on two floors with access via a central staircase. Regrettably there is no lift to the upper floor. For those who are unable to visit the upper rooms there is an audio tour which gives information on the rooms in this area. If this is not offered to you on arrival please advise a member of staff that you would like to use it and they will have it ready for you when you have finished the ground floor rooms.

Chairs are situated throughout the House for those who may need to sit down.

Guided tours are available everyday with the exception of busy weekends or event days when room wardens are available in each room to assist. Each room also has information sheets for those who would like to find out a little more. These are available in both standard and large print.

The guided tour lasts approximately one hour and will take you through all the public rooms. Once you have completed your tour you will exit the house into the main courtyard. The door width is 120cm with a step of 13cm on to a shingle courtyard. A ramp is available, should this be required please speak to a member of the house staff who will put it in place for you.

Visiting the British Raj Exhibition

Across the courtyard is the British Raj exhibition an exhibition highlighting the Lytton Family's connections with India. There are two stone steps at the entrance which are 19cm high; the entrance is 80cm wide. There is a ramp to assist with easy entry, should you require this please speak to a member of staff who will put it in place for you. The exhibition is all on one level and includes a presentation which lasts for approximately 20 minutes. There is enough seating for a large group to be able to watch the presentation at one time.

Lighting in all areas is a mixture of natural and electric light.

Visitor Wheelchairs

Visitors are welcome to bring their manual and motorised wheelchairs to Knebworth House. Please note that most of the grounds are grass, gravel or woodland track and therefore visitors will find them uneven. Care should therefore be taken when pushing or using motorised wheelchairs.

Knebworth House has a manual wheelchair available for visitors to loan, available from the Gift Shop, near the garden entrance. This is available on a first come basis and cannot be reserved.

Public Toilets

Male and female toilets are located at the Adventure Playground, the House, Garden Terrace Tea Room and in the toilet block opposite the tea room.

Disabled Toilets

A unisex disabled toilet is located at the Adventure Playground which is accessible over Hardwood Play Chip.

Other disabled toilets are located at the toilet block opposite the tea room which is accessible over the gravel car park via a concrete ramp, in the tea room and in the House.

Each lavatory has handrails either side of the lavatory which can be left in the upright position or brought down horizontally. There are grab rails on either side of the lavatory. There is an alarm call system

Baby Changing Facilities

A baby changing facility is located at the Adventure Playground which is accessible over Hardwood Play Chip.

Further baby changing facilities are located at the toilet block opposite the tea room which is accessible over the gravel car park, in the tea room and in the House.

Catering Facilities

There are two catering facilities:

A small concession located at the Adventure Playground accessed across grass. There are also dedicated picnic areas and a picnic gazebo with picnic benches within the playground area.

The Garden Terrace Tea Room is a self-service cafe situated adjacent to the Gift Shop at the entrance to the gardens. Access is across gravel, onto concrete paving stones and then through the main entrance which has two doors, allowing easy access for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

The Garden Terrace Tea Room is perfectly situated with views of the house from the tiered patio areas, with the vast opening creating a bright and airy feel to the tea room. Additional picnic benches can be found in close proximity to the tea room on a combination of gravel, bark and grass areas.

All food on site is either individually priced or from the menu boards with all final totals visible on the till and receipts available on request. A large print menu with prices is available on request.

The tea room offers a selection of sandwiches, baguettes, wraps, hot snacks, freshly prepared salads and handmade cakes and caters for special dietary requirements

Meals are paid for at the tills. Staff are ready and willing to help anybody who requires it.

Lighting is provided through a combination of natural and electric lighting.

Additional picnic benches can be found close to the tea room on a combination of gravel and grass.

BBQs: Visitors are welcome to bring picnics and BBQs to Knebworth Park. There are picnic benches around the playground on the grass. There is also a roofed picnic gazebo on Hardwood Play Chips.

Please note that BBQs are welcome but must be raised off the ground so not to damage the grass. They should also be disposed of carefully so that hot coals do not start fires within the bins. Several of our litter bins at the playground carry a 'Firexpire' mechanism that on detecting a fire releases a metal lid over the internal bin liner and denies the fire oxygen and so extinguishes the fire and so stops damage to the bins and potential harm to visitors

First Aid Facilities

At any given time there are a number of St John Ambulance trained and qualified First Aiders on duty to assist visitors.

There is a dedicated First Aid facility at the Adventure Playground. The playground has a Supervisor who is a qualified First Aider. While the House, Gardens and Park are open there is also a Duty Park Manager who is a qualified First Aider.

Formal Gardens

There are 28 acres of Formal Gardens. The entrance has two routes which can be taken. You can turn left and enter via the Garden Terrace Room patio area or turn right. Each of the routes have a slight slope and both lead on to a wheelchair route should this be required. Inside the entrance to the Formal Gardens is a large

information map of the garden which includes walkways. A free garden map is available from the Gift Shop.

The Formal Gardens consist of many “rooms” with a number of different terrain which include gravel, bark, grass and sand. Some of the paths have tight turns which may not suit all pushchairs or wheelchairs. Around the garden there are some steps but these can be avoided to gain access to other areas. Visitors are able to walk on the grass unless otherwise stated.

A pond is located on the sunken lawn, in the rose garden and also near to the wilderness area, there are no safety barriers so extra care should be taken around these areas, especially if you have small children.

The rose garden which is located beyond the sunken lawn has a large selection of roses which during the summer months give a fantastic aroma.

The herb garden located next to the walled garden is an area of many sensory pleasures.

The Dinosaur Trail:

Set in the woodland wilderness garden in a natural setting, this educational trail through prehistoric history features 72 life size sculptures of dinosaurs. The trail is a circular bark path suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

We regret that no dogs with the exception of assistance dogs are allowed in the gardens.

Benches are situated in all areas of the gardens to allow visitors the opportunity to sit and enjoy the surroundings.

Gift Shops

There are two shops that offer a wide selection of gifts and books for all ages:

- Located adjacent to the Garden Terrace Tea Room. Access is across a shingle area and a wooden ramp which is 33cm high, 99cm wide. The door entrance is 112cm wide when fully open. Whilst accessible for those in wheelchairs the shop is fairly small. The counter is 94cm high. Staff can move to the side of the counter if necessary. It is also a visitor information centre and staff are ready and willing to help visitors.
- A smaller gift shop is located on the ground floor of the House. The counter is 99cm high. Staff can move to the side of the counter if necessary.

Shop staff are identifiable by their Knebworth name badges.

Lighting in both shops is a combination of natural and electric light.

Adventure Playground

This is an outdoor play area.

Please note that some attractions may be shut during wet and windy weather for safety reasons.

There are six members of staff present when the playground is open. This includes a qualified First Aider and a Supervisor.

There is a height restriction of 1.18 metres which applies to use of the Bouncy Castle and the two slides.

The Fort – is a wooden structure suitable for children from 4 – 15 and contains various play equipment. The ground area is Hardwood Play Chips. Toilets and a First Aid facility are located inside the Fort.

Various play equipment has been designed in mind for children with disabilities. These include:

- Nest Swing
- Inclusive Orbit – a roundabout with its own wheelchair station
- Bouncy Castle
- Tractor Tyre Swing

The play equipment is spread over a wide area and is on grass, some equipment is on a slope. Within the Fort and around all play equipment the surface is Hardwood Play Chip.

Visitors may wish to enjoy a walk from the playground across sloping parkland to access the House, Gardens and Garden Terrace Tea Room. This takes approximately 20 minutes. Please be aware you may encounter roaming deer, they are wild animals and should not be approached. The terrain is uneven and there may be rabbit holes. For those in wheelchairs we recommend driving to the House and supporting facilities.

There are large, coloured and easy to read 'You Are Here' maps located at the Adventure Playground between the Bouncy Castle and the catering outlet.

The Miniature Railway - the miniature railway is located at the far end of the playground and is accessible across the grassed play area.

Mausoleum

This is the resting place of Mrs Bulwer-Lytton and other members of the Lytton family. This is located close to St Mary's Church and is only accessible on foot across grass.

St Mary's Church

St Mary's is the Norman Parish Church of Knebworth. The Church is open daily to visitors – please respect times of worship. It is a short walk from the car park, across grass to St Mary's Church.

Public Footpath

There is a public footpath that runs through Knebworth Park that people are welcome to use. It is well sign posted. The Footpath consists of a mixture of hard standing, tarmac, concrete and grass – some of which may be uneven.

Those using the Public Footpath must stay on the path. Should walkers wish to enter the House, Gardens and Parks then they must purchase a ticket. Tickets are available from a Knebworth member of staff situated at St Mary's gate located by St Mary's Church.

When the House, Gardens and Park are closed people may still use the Public Footpath and must not stray into the Park.

From September to April wild Red and Manchurian Sika deer roam freely within the Park. Walkers must be aware that they should not approach the deer.

Additional Information

Staff are trained in fire procedures and will direct you out of the building in the case of a fire alarm.

We operate a no smoking policy within the House, Garden Terrace Tea Room and Fort area of the adventure playground.

There maybe background music or a tannoy system used on event days. There is music in the tea room.

Future Plans

There are several exciting developments and attractions planned for the future to increase the appeal to visitors:

A larger Gift Shop that will provide better access and a wider choice of gifts.

A Lecture Auditorium with exhibition and conference facilities along with additional toilet facilities.

Recruit / train guides who will be able to conduct a house tour in sign language for people who are hard of hearing.

Access Statement – this can be downloaded from our website: www.knebworthhouse.com. Alternatively, contact the Estate Office on: 01438 812 661, and we will send a copy to you by post.

A hard copy is also available at the entrance. Please ask a member of staff.

This Access Statement is updated annually, although it is constantly reviewed.

Prepared: February 2010