ACCESS STATEMENT FOR WHEEL CHAIRS
AT
HERGEST CROFT GARDENS

Introduction
The Banks family welcomes you to Hergest Croft Gardens, which lie in the heart of
the rolling countryside of the Welsh Marches. Four generations of our family have
been passionate gardeners and distinguished dendrologists who have created these
gardens over the last 115 years. They remain largely as they were conceived a cen-
tury ago as the family’s garden. They extend over 28 ha (70 acres) and contain an
enormous collection of plants, especially trees and shrubs, but there are also colour-
ful rose gardens, herbaceous borders, spring borders, a vegetable garden, a large
rockery as well as extensive areas of woodland gardens.

As the gardens are situated on a relatively steep hill which rises from about 200m
(650ft) at the lower end of the Kitchen Garden to over 300m (950ft) at the top of the
Maple Grove, and the majority of the paths are mown grass, it can be rather strenu-
ous to get to all the areas in a wheel chair. There are hard surfaced paths, covered
with a layer of small granite chippings from the local quarry, covering most of the
important areas of the Garden close to the house. There are some flights of steps,
although alternative routes do exist. In the woodland areas the mown grass paths
can be used so long as the ground is dry.

The Banks family take their responsibilities for providing universal access seriously
and adhere to the Equality Act but due to the historic quality of Hergest Croft Gar-
dens it is not possible to provide wheel chair access to the whole site.
**Arrival**

The car park is situated on the right side of Ridgebourne Road, a short way from the entrance to the gardens which is through the Conservatory. The car park has two signed disabled parking places and there is one disabled dropping off bay in the driveway of Hergest Croft. Disabled visitors requiring drop-off should proceed past the car park and take the next turning on the left and down the drive to the house. The entrance into the Conservatory has a portable ramp which covers two low steps. Once through the conservatory the reception desk is in front of you.

**Reception, Shop and Tearoom**

Once entry tickets have been bought; you can pass through the shop in the original hall and enter the tearoom through the mahogany door into the old dining room or move through the drawing room to the wooden veranda. On fine days, teas are served outside on the upper terrace, which can be reached by steps from the veranda or accessed by wheelchairs past the plant sales area to the west of the House.

**Disabled Toilet**

Access to the Disabled Toilet which used to be the gentleman’s lavatory is from the large door from the hall leading to the lobby and the front door of the house. The toilet has twist locks, emergency alarm and fitted grab rails. The hand basin is fitted with a lever taps, paper towel dispenser and mirror. It also contains a baby changing facility. The public toilets are outside at the eastern end of the driveway.
The Gardens

To access the Gardens from the reception area you can either go through the left hand door of the conservatory or straight ahead through the door that you came in. If you go left this leads you to the plant sales area and onto the upper terrace where there are wrought iron tables and chairs used by visitors to the tearoom. This will give you a glorious view across the front lawn.

If you wish to explore most of the garden, use the portable ramp to cross over the two steps at the entrance to the conservatory into the driveway. Take the drive to the cattle grid and before you reach it there is a gravel path on your left. It has a fairly short incline but once past this you have reached the higher part of Hergest Croft Garden. There are several hard surface paths which will show you the Autumn Border, the Sycamore Walk and lead you to the Boundary Path.

Follow the Boundary Path and on the right are two entrances to the Azalea Garden and Maple Grove. The wrought iron “Wembley” Gate is the second entrance and has the wider gate. There are mown paths throughout which are passable if dry but there is quite a steep incline to reach top of the Maple Grove and the Millennium seat.
Once past the Croquet Lawn there is a choice to either turn left along Elizabeth Walk and arrive back at the top of the front lawn or drop down a short incline to the Daisy Border where you turn left. This is a grass path which is passable when dry. The flat lawn in front of the house was the original double tennis court and can be reached either from the lawn at the eastern end of the Daisy Border or from the Slate Garden. On the east side of the lawn there is a granite gravel path around the Rockery. This does contain gravel and stone paths which can be partially accessed by a wheelchair. Passing by two small ponds you arrive at the Slate Garden. From here you can either turn left and follow the path up to the front lawn or lift the chain on the wrought iron gate and move up the incline to the entrance path from the car park. If you turn left you arrive at forecourt of the house and back where you started. If you turn right through the wrought iron gate, cross the orchard on a tightly mown path you will reach the Kitchen Garden. The garden lies on a gentle incline and has several granite chipping paths but most are closely mown.

Additional Information

Dogs are welcome and water is provided in the conservatory.
There is one wheelchair available for use
Some staff have first aid training

Contact Information

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This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to the suitability for those with disabilities, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that are offered for all visitors.