



Middleton Hall Access Report

This report aims to provide an accurate description of our facilities, services and accessibility to visitors.

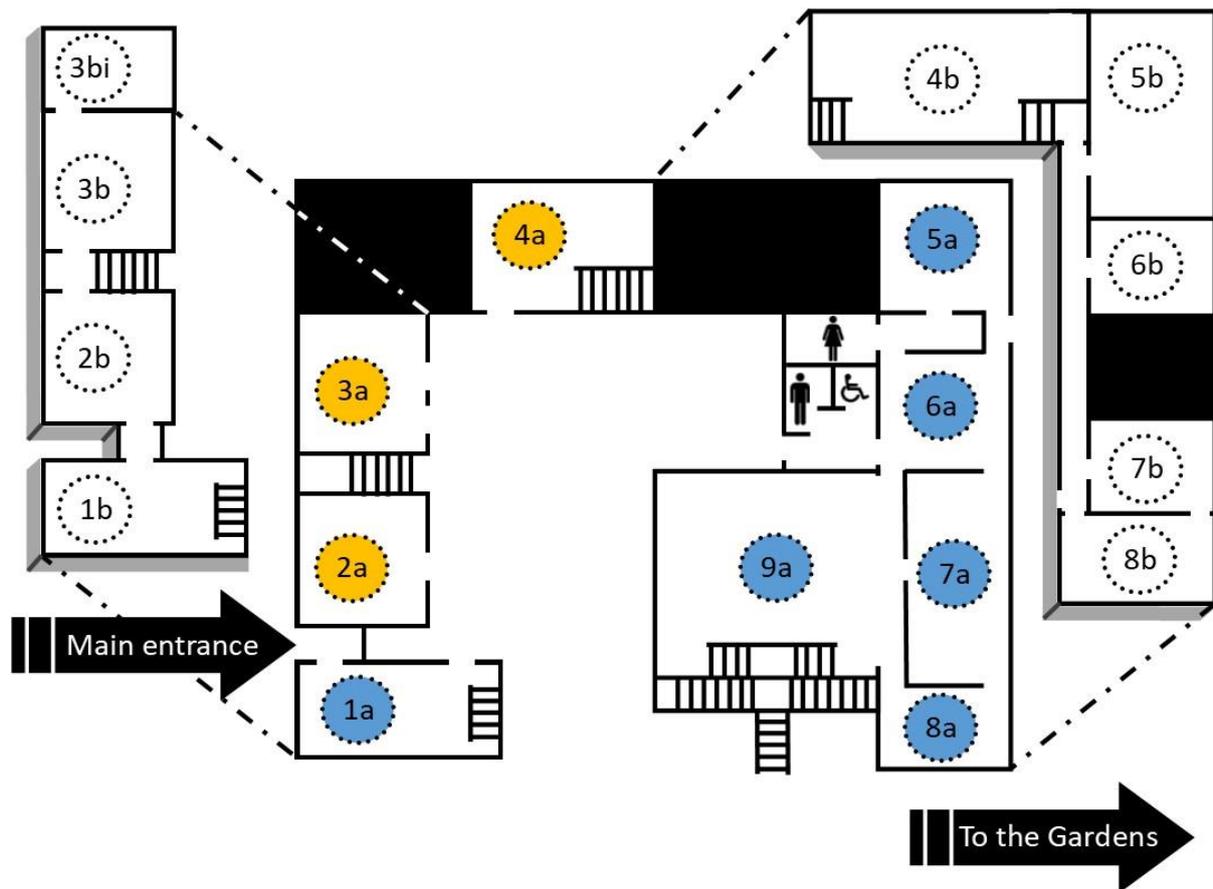
Overview

Middleton Hall is a Grade II* historic house situated on a 42-acre site with a Walled Garden and extensive grounds including a Site of Special Scientific Interest and the oldest man-made lake in Warwickshire. In 2018, we are open to the public five days a week between April and September, and for special open days during the winter months. The venue is also available for private hire, typically for weddings, parties and concerts.

There is a Courtyard Centre on site with a café and several small independent shops, which is free to enter. This report has a section with information about accessing the Courtyard (page 8).

The staircases have handrails but we do not have a lift. Some of the ground floor outbuildings have small lips or single steps up and down. The upstairs of the house and parts of the downstairs are not accessible to wheelchair or pushchair users and people with walking difficulties may also be unable to access these parts of the building. (See Map I for rooms marked in blue that are fully accessible, those marked orange have only one step down into them).

Map I



There is a virtual display in the entrance (room 1a) which gives an in-depth history of the Hall. The Peel Museum (room 5B) is on the first floor and there is an interactive display about the Peel Museum on the ground floor in the main entrance (room 1a).

The gardens have gravel, slabbed and grass paths and are generally wheelchair and pushchair accessible however the accessibility may be hindered by wet weather conditions. The nature walk is not wheelchair or pushchair accessible.

The hall admits approximately 20 visitors per day during the open season. On pre-planned public event days and special events, the Hall, gardens and grounds can admit anywhere between 1,000 and 1,200 visitors in one day. Please see our website for more information about upcoming events: www.middleton-hall.co.uk/whats-on

We are working hard to improve our displays and exhibitions to ensure they adhere to the Dyslexia Style Guide and have more interactive elements. This is a slow process so please be aware that some of the elements in our displays may not use the appropriate font size and colours or have enough interactive features to make them accessible to all.

We strive to make Middleton Hall accessible to people of all ages and abilities. As an independent charitable trust with no funding from any other bodies or organisations, we are unable to make

changes as fast as we would like to. However, accessibility is a priority for us and we are doing our best to utilise our limited resources to improve our facilities, services and information.

Pre-Arrival

Middleton Hall is located along the A4091, on the border between North Warwickshire and Staffordshire. It is approximately a ten-minute drive from Tamworth town centre and a fifteen-minute drive from Sutton Coldfield. Middleton Village is a two-minute drive away and we have known visitors walk to the Hall from the village, but we do not encourage or advise this as there are no footpaths between the village and the Hall, and crossing the A4091 on foot is dangerous. The narrow driveway leading off the A4091 to the Hall has recently undergone maintenance work installing passing places, so that vehicles can safely pass each other without having to move onto the grass.

Although there is a bus stop on the A4091, at the top of our driveway, buses no longer run along this route. Tamworth train station is 5.2 miles away and Sutton Coldfield train station is 6 miles away.

We have the use of one wheelchair available on site. If you would like to use this wheelchair, please ask at reception on your arrival or contact us prior to your visit. We do not have audio books, audio tours or sign language tours available at present. No bikes can be brought into the Hall, gardens or grounds but can enter the Courtyard. We do not currently have a bike rack and would not advise our visitors to leave bikes unattended.

Car Parking and Arrival

We have two car parks: the main car park and the overflow car park as an extension to our main carpark in an adjacent field. The main car park is always open and the overflow car park is open when we expect a high volume of visitors. Both car parks can be used by visitors to the Hall and the Courtyard café and shops. The main carpark does not have individual parking bays painted out, but does have bollards and rope encouraging visitors to park in straight lines. The car park fits approximately 70 cars. There are 4 designated disabled parking spaces (figure 1).



Figure 1

The surface is made of compacted gravel. The accessible parking spaces in the main car park are located approximately 50 metres from the reception desk in the Hall, and approximately 10 metres from the entrance to the car park. The overflow car park does not have individual bays painted out. It does not have designated disabled parking bays. On event days where we expect a high number of visitors, car parking stewards monitor both car parks and can direct blue badge holders to appropriate parking.

When walking from the car park to the Courtyard and the Hall, visitors will walk past an unguarded moat. To access the Hall, there is a ramp onto a wooden footbridge with hand rails (figure 2) and a ramp down into a space just outside the entrance (figure 3). The entrance into the reception is flat. The reception desk is 1m high.



Figure 2

Figure 3

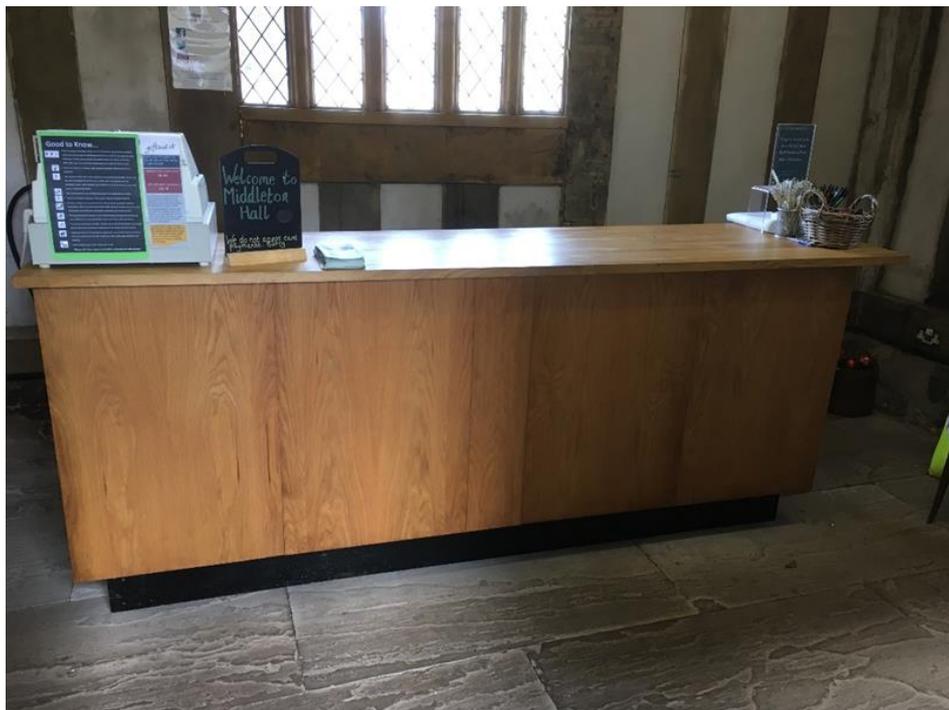


Figure 4

A coded map along with four different self-guided trails can be collected from reception. Wheelchairs and pushchairs can be left in the reception area if you **ask a member of staff** or a volunteer and there is adequate space for it to be left safely. Personal belongings are left in the reception area at the visitor's own risk.

Toilets

The main Hall toilets are located on the ground floor. There are separate male and female toilets, and an accessible toilet. The male toilets have two cubicles and three urinals. The female toilets have 3 cubicles.

To access the toilets from the reception, visitors must cross a gravelled courtyard. The accessible doors leading into the main building where the toilets are located are 82cm wide. The door into the accessible toilet is 86cm wide. The light can be turned on using a pull chord that is 120cm from the floor. The accessible toilet has vertical and horizontal hands rails and is fitted with a red, emergency pull chord that activates an alarm when pulled. The wash bowl is 69cm from the floor and the hand dryer is 103cm from the floor (figure 5).



Figure 5

Public toilets are also located in the Courtyard. They can be accessed by using a ramp (figure 6). The female toilets have two cubicles and the male toilets have two cubicles. There is one wash basin and hand dryer in each toilet.

There is not currently an accessible toilet in the courtyard. When staff are present at the Hall, visitors may ask to use this toilet by telephoning our office or by speaking to one of the courtyard tenants (café/shop owners). When the Hall is not staffed, there is not an accessible toilet available

for use. We understand this is very inconvenient and potentially embarrassing for Courtyard visitors. We are working hard to improve toilet facilities in the Courtyard.

With the exception of the accessible toilet, we do not have gender neutral toilets.



Figure 6

Ground Floor Access (The Main Hall)

West Wing

The ground floor of the West Wing can be accessed using the accessible entrance (figure 7). There are two single doors 1.5m apart, both 82cm wide. All ground floor rooms and toilets can be accessed using doors that are 80cm or wider.

Due to the age and nature of the Great Hall floor, the surface is uneven in parts.

Figure 7



Exhibition Room, Lower Stone Building and Old Kitchen

There is a step down into the Exhibition Room.

The lower Stone Building can be accessed using two doors. Both doorways have a step down and lighting in the room is restricted. The doorways are part of the original structure dating back to the 13th century, so are low.

There is small lip along the doorway in to the Old Kitchen.

Access to the First Floor (The Main Hall)

We do not have a lift. All first floor rooms can only be accessed via stairs.

The main buildings have two floors, but as they are separate buildings they must be accessed using different staircases.

West Wing

The first floor of the west wing can be accessed via two public staircases. The stair case leading from the Great Hall has a total 26 steps, with one landing after 8 steps, and another landing after 9

steps. There are hand rails both sides, but the stair case is wide so both handrails cannot be used together.

The west wing can be accessed via the Old Kitchen. There is a small lip along the threshold of the entrance to the Old Kitchen. There are 15 steps leading up to the History Room, with a handrail on the left-hand side and the wall on the other. Once in the History Room, there are 6 steps, with a landing after 3 steps, leading up to the west wing corridor with a handrail on one side and a wall on the other.

There are 4 rooms open to the public along the west wing corridor, including the Peel Museum.

The Jettied Building, John Ray Room and Upper Stone Building

The upstairs of the Jettied Building can be accessed using a staircase of 13 steps with handrails both sides, the headspace is restricted and the steps uneven. To access the John Ray Room from the upper Jettied Building requires taking two steps down into a short corridor, and then another step down into the John Ray Room. This route can also be done in reverse.

The John Ray Building and Stone Building can be accessed from the gravelled courtyard via a staircase of 12 steps with handrails both sides. Once on the landing, entrance to the upper Stone Building can be gained through taking two steps down in to the room.

Gardens and SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) Nature Walk

Access to the Walled Garden from the Hall is over grass (figure 8). The main entrance to the Walled Garden has a small single lip and wheelchair users may not be able to use this entrance independently. The side gate can be accessed by an approximately 10-metre journey across flat, grassed ground; there is a small lip. The Walled Garden paths are wide enough for wheelchair and pushchair users but they are gravelled (figure 9).

The orchard is grassed and may cause difficulty to some wheelchair users. Beware of deep open water.

The nature trail is long, circular walk lasting approximately 30 minutes. The lake is deep and open. The nature trail paths consist of a variation of grass and dirt and are uneven in parts. **Visitors are asked not to jump the fence.**

Figure 8



Figure 9



Interactive Elements

When creating new and improving current displays, we are striving to include more interesting and interactive ways of display information to our visitors. As previously stated, our small budget restricts us from making the improvements we would like to make so we are unable to match the level and advancement of interaction found in better funded museums. We do, however, have 3 interactive touch screen displays; dressing up and colouring in activities; two rooms where visitors can play the instruments; a new children's trail including a new children's character (recommended for ages 7 to 11) and a mutant ladybird hunt (recommended for ages 3 to 7). Some displays also encourage visitors to feel and smell things such as hair and herbs, and to use a chalk board and play with old fashioned toys. We have a projected video playing on loop of actors talking about the history of the Hall. On some event days, we run additional interactive activities. All of our activities are **free of charge**, unless stated otherwise.

The Courtyard Centre

There is a pathway leading from the main park into the courtyard centre, half compacted gravel and half paved (figure 10). The toilets are located on the left-hand side as you walk in.



Figure 10

The Courtyard Centre has a café and thirteen small, independent shopping outlets. There is a narrow, uneven, paved pathway running around the edge of the courtyard reaching the entrance to each business and the centre of the courtyard is gravelled and has multiple picnic benches. There is a permanent shelter over one picnic bench and temporary parasols for sunny days over others (figure 11).



Figure 11

There is a ramp up to the café entrance and a small step in the doorway. There is a step, steps or a lip into the other units.



Figure 12

Dogs are permitted in the outdoor seating area of the courtyard but only guide dogs are permitted inside the café and shops.

Courtyard Opening Times and Contact Details

You may contact the Hall regarding the Courtyard, but you may also find information on the website or Facebook pages of the independent businesses. All of the businesses are open a minimum of 10am till 4:30pm, Wednesday to Sunday. The café opens 10am till 4:30pm 7 days a week. Appointment based businesses may open outside of the basic Courtyard opening hours.

Contact information for all of our units can be found on our website: <http://www.middleton-hall.co.uk/the-courtyard/>

Additional Information

- No dogs except for guide dogs allowed inside the house. Dogs are allowed in the gardens and grounds providing they are kept on a lead and all mess is disposed of.
- The nearest pharmacy is in Fazely - 2.8miles away.
- The nearest hospital is Good Hope Hospital - 5.7 miles away.
- There is open water across our site.

Contact Information

Telephone No.: 01827 283 095

Email: enquiries@middleton-hall.co.uk

Address: Middleton Hall, Middleton, Tamworth, B78 2AE

Opening Hours:

April to September – Sunday to Wednesday, 11am till 4pm

October to March – special events only. For more information, click here: <http://www.middleton-hall.co.uk/whats-on/>

Office Hours:

April to September – Sunday to Thursday, 9am till 4pm

October to March – Monday to Friday, 9am till 4pm

We are a small team and cannot guarantee someone will always be in the office during our stated office hours.