



Our illustrated access guide



WHAT WE MEAN BY ACCESS

Our definition of access

We believe that all people have a fundamental right to engage with, use and enjoy the Mill, Welcome Building and grounds.

We recognise that there are some barriers to access for some at some levels of the Silk Mill.

We define access as something that is made possible when physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological and emotional barriers are removed or reduced.

We will strive to make sure that information on access is available in a range of formats including via our website.

We will review the access guide regularly to ensure it is in line with – or exceeds - national guidelines and standards.

Our commitment to accessibility

Whitchurch Silk Mill aims to provide the widest possible access to its site, collections and services to enable audiences from all sections of the community to enjoy use of the Mill.

Our statement has been written in line with Whitchurch Silk Mill's Equal Opportunity Policy, which says: "The Trust will not discriminate on grounds of sex, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, marital status, civil partnership status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origins, disability or age, or any other form of discrimination (whether prohibited by legislation or otherwise)."

Our aim is to build accessibility into everything we do to develop and improve the Mill. Our commitment is long term and we plan to make continuous improvements as our resources permit.

Our commitment to accessibility extends to our staff, volunteers and work placements as well as visitors.

We are committed to ongoing training in access issues for staff and volunteers.

Eliminating barriers to accessibility

To eliminate barriers and ensure equality of access we will consider the following forms of accessibility:

- **Physical:** to enable people with physical disabilities to reach and appreciate every part of the Mill. To take into account the needs of the elderly and of people caring for young people
- **Sensory:** to enable visitors with impaired vision or hearing to enjoy the Mill's buildings and collections
- **Intellectual:** we recognise that people have different learning styles and we will aim to provide interpretation in a range of formats. We also aim to ensure people with learning difficulties can engage with and enjoy the mill and the collections
- **Cultural:** to consider the needs of people for whom English is not a first language, or whose knowledge of English history and culture may be limited
- **Attitudinal and emotional:** to ensure the Mill environment and Mill Team are welcoming to visitors from all sections of the community. We will also aim to ensure people of Whitchurch feel the Mill is of significance and welcoming to them
- **Financial:** when reviewing our admission charges we will take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access



PHYSICAL AND SENSORY ACCESS TO THE MILL
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:
AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE

Access to the Mill

We aim to provide equal access to our buildings, grounds and facilities for all visitors. The Mill is a Grade II* listed building, therefore some physical adaptations are impossible to undertake.

Nevertheless, we are constantly working towards improving the facilities available to visitors with disabilities and will actively attempt to make our collections accessible.

We offer free admission to carers.

Whilst the Silk Mill has a lift to all three floors for those with mobility problems, as with other similar attractions, due to Fire Regulations we can only have one confined wheelchair user in the Mill building at one time.

The following pages (with the **turquoise stripe** at the bottom) are an illustrated guide to getting round the Mill and its grounds, highlighting areas where some of our visitors with physical and sensory challenges may find access more difficult.

Accessing the Mill and its Grounds

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

Whitchurch Silk Mill is in the centre of the country town of Whitchurch, Hampshire, seven miles from Andover. The Mill is an exciting place where you can discover how silk is woven. It is on a level site next to the River Test.

The Silk Mill is a member of the Quality Assurance Scheme.

General description

- The Mill is on three floors with an accessible lift to the upper floors
- Our café and shop are in a separate building on the ground floor, which is also the entrance to the Mill
- Allow 1.5 hours for your visit or, if part of a group, 2.5 hours
- A wheelchair is available for free loan – please request in advance
- The shop sells silk giftware and accessories and other items
- The café sells light lunches and cakes, as well as hot and cold drinks



General description - continued

- There are two audio installations, three silent videos with subtitles and a number of physical interactives to help bring the Mill alive
- Lighting is via windows, automated and LED lights
- Seating is available throughout the Mill and in the grounds
- Trained assistance dogs are welcome
- There is signage in the Mill and grounds



We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance, please call **01256 892065** or email **info@whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk**

Getting to the Mill

Public transport

- Buses: the Andover to Basingstoke bus, No 76, stops in Bell Street, 0.25 miles from the Mill. The Winchester to Basingstoke bus, No 86, stops outside the Mill
- Whitchurch railway station is just over 0.5 miles away (10 to 15 minute walk) down a steep hill



By car and bicycle

- The Mill has two car parking spaces, which are exclusively for drivers and passengers with disabilities
- The tarmacked public car park next to the Mill is free and has 31 spaces – two for drivers and passengers with disabilities **(pictured left)**
- From the car park there is a 25m paved path and wooden-floored bridge leading into the Silk Mill reception
- There is a car park in Bell Street, which is also free and is about 0.25 miles from the Mill. It has a Radar lavatory and 83 parking spaces, some tarmac and some gravel
- There are four bicycle stands in the Mill's onsite car park

Getting to the Mill – through main entrance

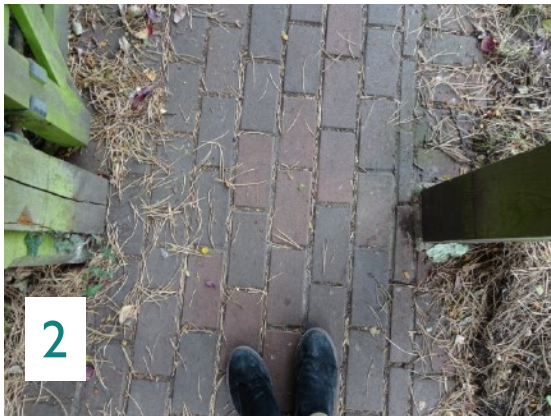


1. Space for disabled drivers
2. The depth of the gravel
3. The front door opens outwards manually – ask our Welcome Hosts if you require assistance
4. Crossing the threshold

The Mill Welcome Building main entrance.

Doors on site are manually operated except for the lift doors.

Getting to the Mill – from the public car park



1. Through the gate
2. The gate width
3. Across the wooden bridge with anti-slip strips
4. The entrance

The entrance to the Mill Welcome Building from the public car park

The Welcome Building



Shop

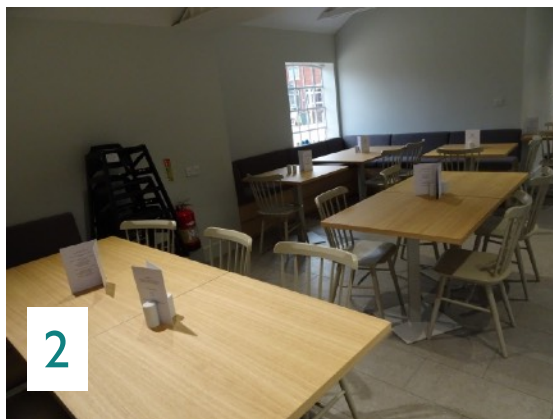
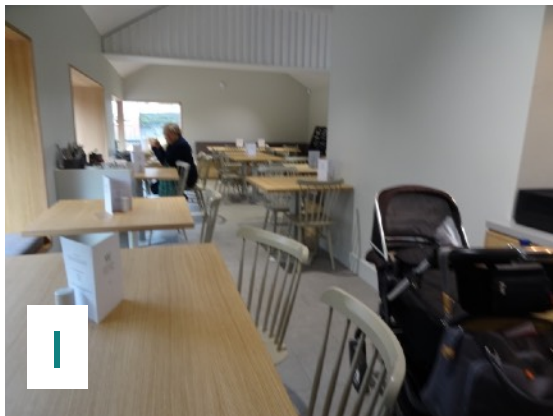


Cafe

The shop and café have porcelain tiles and there is space for the movement of wheelchairs.

Inside the Welcome Building

The Mill Welcome Building has a flat, level porcelain tiled floor. The café, shop, main and accessible toilets are situated in this building.

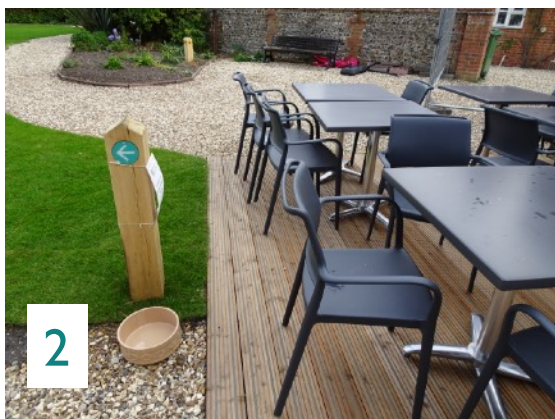
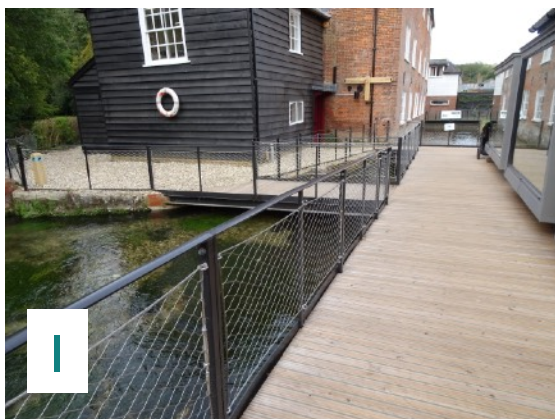


1. The café has armless chairs and seating
2. High chairs BS:EN 14988

3. First door to the toilets
4. Second door to accessible toilet & baby change unit

5. Going out towards the main Mill building
6. Wooden path with anti-slip strips on exit

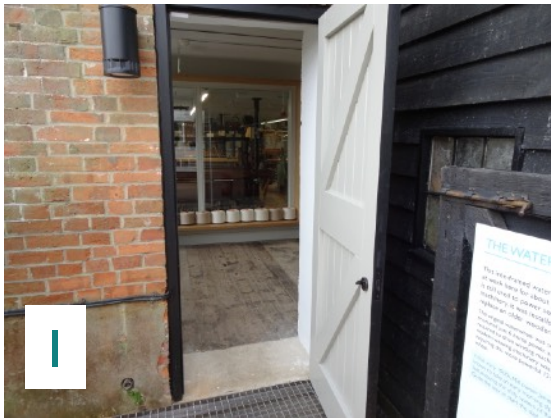
From the Welcome Building to the Mill



1. The wooden path is flat and level with anti-slip strips
2. The café outdoor seating has chairs with arms

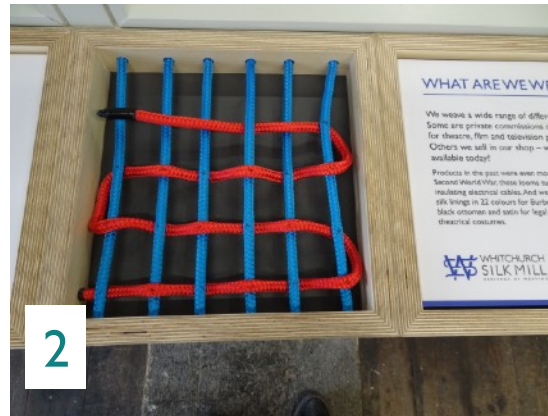
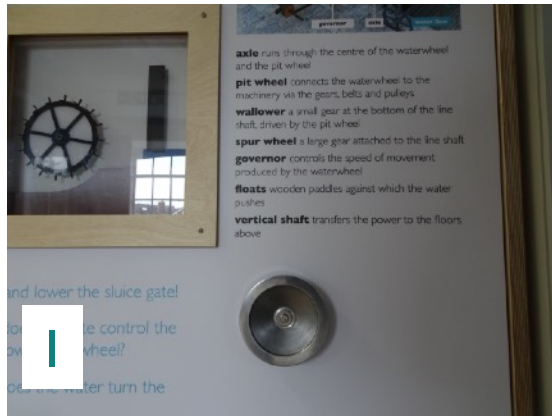
3. Towards the Mill entrance
4. Gravel path to the entrance with grass either side
5. The gravel on the path
6. There is a small lip up to the wooden path

Entering the Silk Mill main building



There is grating at the entrance doorway. The door opens outwards manually.

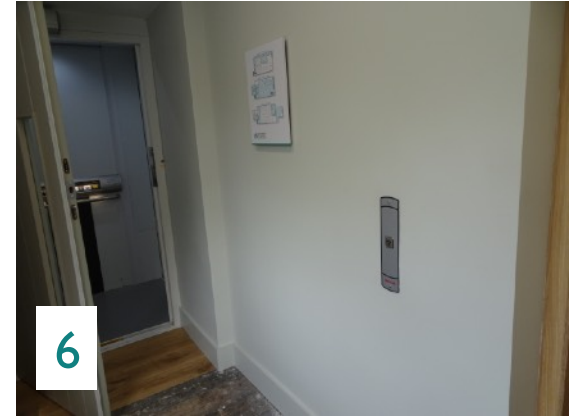
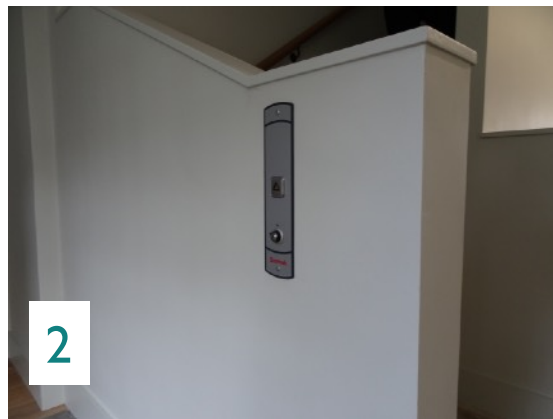
Display signage



There are many information boards and interactive displays around the Mill. Please ask in the Mill office (situated on the middle floor) if you require any assistance operating any of the interactives.

Getting to the top floor – by lift

The self-guided tour takes you from the ground floor to the second floor



1. The lift is at the other end of the foyer from the entrance door to the right
2. The call button for the lift

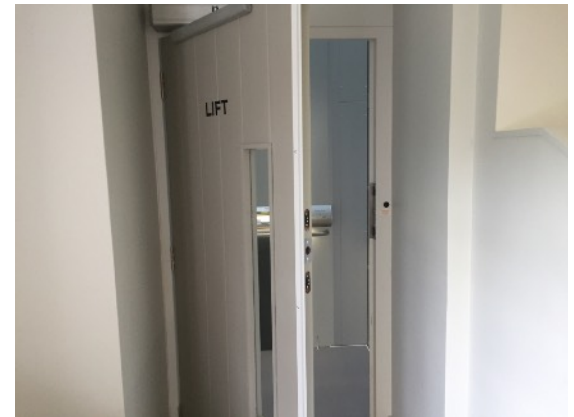
3. The lift door opens automatically outwards
4. Press and hold the button until the door opens

5. Exit onto the second floor
6. The lift door will automatically close after exit

The Lift

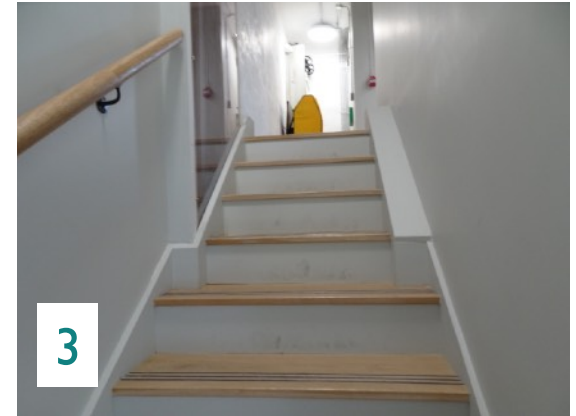
The self-guided tour takes you from the ground floor to the second floor

- The lift goes to all floors
- The lift announces the floor number at each floor stop
- The lift floor buttons have raised numbers and braille
- The lift shows the numbers at each floor level
- The lift announces when the door is about to open or close
- No music is played in the lift



Getting to the top floor – by stairs

The self-guided tour takes you from the ground floor to the second floor via the waterwheel viewing area (see next page)



1. Some of the Mill floors are uneven – the Mill was built in 1815
2. The stairs are quite steep
3. The stairs have robust handrails. Because the self-guided tour is one-way, you shouldn't meet anyone going the other way on the stairs

Waterwheel viewing area

Exit the lift on the middle floor to reach the waterwheel viewing area.



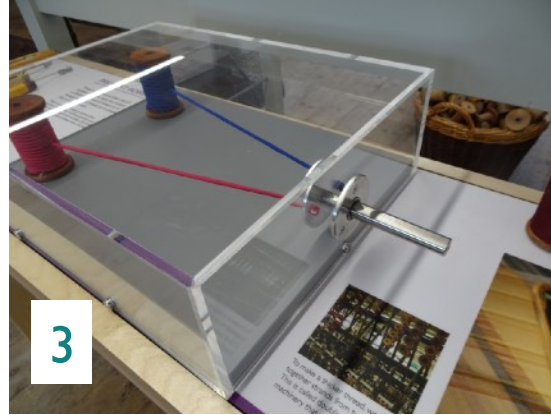
The waterwheel viewing area has three steps down into the room. You can view the waterwheel from the top step.

On the top floor

The floors in the main Mill building are quite uneven. They have been there since 1815



1



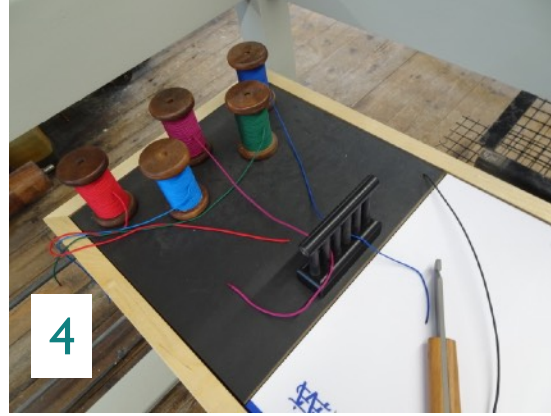
3



5



2



4

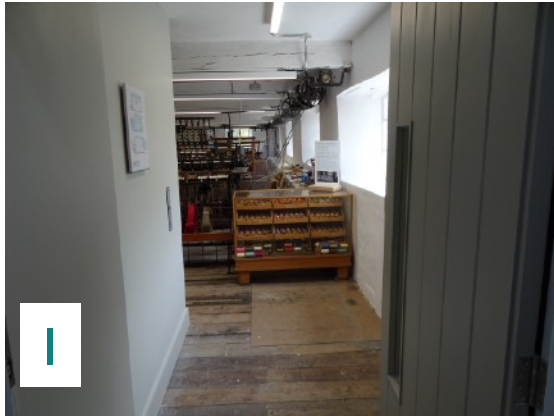
1. The top floor is spacious
2. There are hands-on activities

3. Some of the activities need some strength or dexterity

5. There is an audio display on this floor

Exiting the top floor

The self-guided tour takes you from the second floor to the first (i.e. middle) floor



1. Lift-users should go back to the lift you came up in
2. The stairs are narrow with handrails (seen here from the bottom)

On the middle floor



1. This is where our temporary exhibitions area and Activity Space are situated
2. As with the rest of the Mill, the floors are uneven
3. There is an accessible toilet on this floor

Leaving the middle floor



The stairs back to the ground floor are narrow and twisting with a handrail.

Back on the ground floor



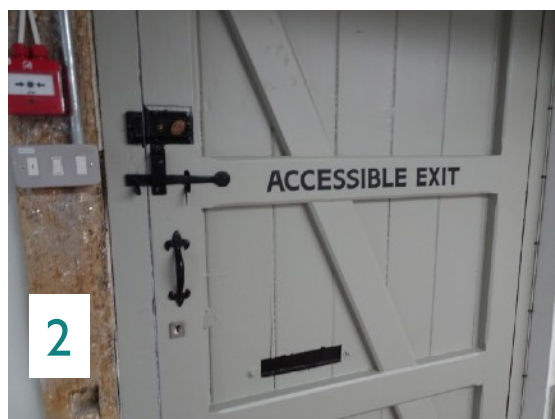
1. If you come down the stairs, you will find yourself at the other end of the Weaving Shed. There are various audio and interactive installations in the area.
2. If you use the lift, you will need to come back outside the front of the Mill...
3. ... and then go through the red door

Through the red door



There is a small step down into this end of the Weaving Shed

Going on to Frog Island



1. Either come out of the Frog Island door
2. Or the Accessible Exit
3. There's a step down from the Frog Island door
4. Or a gravel path around the side of the Mill
5. Frog Island is gravel and grass

Exiting the Mill



You exit by going back into the Welcome Building, where you can shop or use the café before leaving.



ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS, LEARNING
AND COMMUNICATIONS

Access to collections

The Mill Team is committed to increasing public access to the collections and information and to increasing knowledge and understanding of Whitchurch Silk Mill's heritage.

We will provide varied means of access to the collections, including displays, handling sessions, publications and events.

To increase access to the collections not on display we will develop a resource centre, web-based resources and access for researchers.

We will provide levels of information and interpretation to suit a range of audiences and abilities. We will ensure that the presentation and labelling of displays respects a diversity of background.

We will develop our handling collections and loans.

Access to learning

Whitchurch Silk Mill will provide learning opportunities for different audiences and levels of ability and tailor our programme to the needs of specific groups.

We will provide education programmes for all our temporary and permanent displays to interpret the collections for people from a range of backgrounds and abilities.

We will identify and develop partnerships with a range of educational and community organisations to ensure that our activities continue to cater for the widest possible audiences.

Access to communication

We will promote the Mill's activities and events using accessible means of communication.

We will endeavour to provide publicity material on request in alternative formats for a range of needs and languages.

We provide a range of ways that people can communicate with us.

We will evaluate all our services and projects to ensure they meet the provision of this policy and we will consult users and non-users on all new developments.



WHITCHURCH
SILK MILL
HERITAGE OF WEAVING

