

## AUDLEY END HOUSE AND GARDENS, ESSEX

### Hazard Information for Education Visits

It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to complete a risk assessment prior to the site visit. The following information is intended as an aid and does not replace the group leader's own risk assessment. We recommend coming to the site on a free planning visit, to help you with your risk assessment. Please note: where possible, English Heritage staff at the site will be happy to assist you with your queries, but cannot check or sign any section of your risk assessment.

Environmental conditions at historic sites may change rapidly and you'll need to remain alert at all times during your visit. Make sure you wear sensible footwear and dress appropriately for the site and weather. Please be aware that the site may close at short notice due to adverse weather. Where applicable, stonework and trees at our sites are inspected regularly; however, storm damage can sometimes affect the stability of stonework and branches of apparently healthy trees. On-going conservation work may pose a temporary hazard; a member of staff will advise you of any works when you visit. Dogs on leashes may be present on site.

### COVID-19 INFORMATION

We want to reassure you that we're following government guidance to make your trip as safe and enjoyable as possible.

We've introduced a range of new hygiene standards and social distancing measures. Our staff and facilitators have received guidance to help them safely run education visits at this time, and we've also created a general risk assessment for education visitors to help you with your individual risk assessments. You can find this and other information about what to expect on your visit at: [english-heritage.org.uk/schools-what-to-expect](https://english-heritage.org.uk/schools-what-to-expect)

We've also detailed key changes on the individual site schools pages of our website, so please check before you visit. Once your booking is confirmed, we recommend booking a free planning visit to help you prepare for your trip and familiarise yourself with the site.

**There is a one way system operating at Audley End House and Gardens.**

- Please be aware of the one way system operating on site and stick to this route to avoid congestion and to maintain social distancing with other visitors.

**Moving vehicles may pose a hazard upon arrival and while on the site.**

- Coaches drop off outside the site entrance and pupils may have to cross a road.
- Cars drive into the site and across to the car park using the same route as pedestrians.
- Cars also exit the site using a road that is not segregated from pedestrians.

**There are uneven surfaces throughout the house and gardens.**

- Some areas have loose gravel surfaces.
- There may be potholes and various trip hazards around the site.
- Some cobbles and slabs may be slippery when wet.
- Steps, stairs and floors may all be uneven.

**There are number of features within the grounds that may pose a hazard while on the site.**

- There are a number of water features throughout the gardens, including a river, lake, streams and ponds. The edges of some of these are indeterminate and may be slippery or muddy. The water wheel is in a deep pit (more than 2m) containing water.

- The ha-has is a garden feature which is a ditch about 2 metres deep, designed to keep animals out of the formal gardens without being visible when looking across the gardens There is a ha-ha around the parterre garden and another around the Temple of Concorde.
- There are a number of trees throughout the gardens which may have low or loose branches.
- The steps down to the Ice House are very uneven and slippery. There is an unprotected drop from the roof onto paving.
- The glass houses in the kitchen garden do not contain safety glass.
- Paths around the gardens can be slippery and muddy when wet and there may be trip hazards such as projecting roots.

**There are number of hazards in the stable yard and play area, including horses and play equipment.**

- Although normally behind fences or inside stables, horses may be walked around the area of the stable yard.
- Horses will always be supervised by a staff member whilst in public areas.
- Hand washing facilities are situated in the cart yard.
- The play area is situated in the cart yard. The area has slides and swings and needs the normal supervision of adults while letting children use the facilities.
- The play area has been inspected by RoSPA and been given an overall risk rating of LOW.

**Features and lighting within the house may pose hazards.**

- Windows and display cabinets throughout the house do not contain safety glass.
- There are approximately 80 steps on the education tour for schools.
- There are low lighting levels throughout the house to help conserve the fabric.

**Historic features in the Service Wing may pose a hazard.**

- The floors in all rooms are uneven and worn.
- If the main fire in the kitchen is alight it will always attended by a member of staff. When the fire is unlit it will be blocked off in case of falling debris from the chimney.
- The handling material on offer in all rooms includes some items which could cause injury if misused.
- The copper pans in the scullery are very heavy.
- Both box mangles in the dry laundry are not roped off. One is historic and has been dismantled; the other is newer and should not be used in case fingers are caught in the rollers. The mangle in the wet laundry is functioning and fingers can get caught if it is turned.
- There are heavy flat irons on display in the dry laundry.

**Dogs and wildlife may be present on site.**

- Audley End is popular with dog walkers and dogs should be kept on leads.
- The River Cam flows through the site and provides many nesting sites for birds and, as with all animals, there may be a risk of zoonotic infection.
- Visitors should be aware that animals may bite.