

WITLEY COURT AND GARDENS, WORCESTERSHIRE

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

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.

The car and coach park is adjacent to the site.

- There is no designated footpath through the car park.
- It is necessary to cross an access road from the woodland path to the house ruins.

The historic nature of the site presents potential hazards.

- The walls are rough and may contain sharp stones.
- There are climbing hazards on walls and fences; climbing is not permitted in any area.
- The site is exposed to the elements, with limited areas of sheltered space.

There are areas of uneven surfaces around the property.

- Ground surfaces are uneven throughout the site and can be slippery when wet.
- There are remaining stone foundations in the house ruins.
- There are unpaved paths in the Woodland and Wilderness Gardens.
- There may be concealed animal holes in grassy areas.

There are a number of steps and staircases on the site.

- There are wide stone steps leading down to the fountain in the gardens.
- Stone steps may be narrow and uneven.
- Single steps may pose a trip hazard.

There are steep banks and inclines on the site.

- There are steep grassed banks in the Woodland and Wilderness Gardens.
- There are grassed inclines around the house ruins, including small dips which may be concealed.

There are high walls and sheer drops around the site.

- There are the remains of a low pool and water feature set in the floor of the Conservatory.
- The Red Sitting Room, Red Room and Drawing Room have low, unfenced windows with steep drops.

There is a footpath through the Woodland and Wilderness Gardens.

- There are exposed tree roots and natural hazards present on the path.
- The path runs close to the stream and the pool in some places.
- There may be concealed animal holes in grassy areas.
- There are some sections of the path which may be muddy.

There is open access to water on the site.

- A stream, with unprotected banks, runs through the site. The water's edge may be concealed by foliage or aquatic plants.
- There is a small pond in the Wildlife Garden.
- The Perseus and Andromeda fountain is unfenced.
- The Front Pool is unfenced and very deep.

There is play area on site. Children must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.

- There are high platforms and unguarded drops on some apparatus.
- There are short vertical ladders with no guards.
- There is some swinging and suspended apparatus with possible pinch points.