

# Access Statement for The Red House, Aldeburgh

## Introduction

The Red House, the former home of the composer Benjamin Britten and his partner, the tenor Peter Pears, is situated on a private road on the edge of the seaside town of Aldeburgh in Suffolk. The site contains an extensive permanent exhibition dedicated to Britten and Pears' life and works along with their home, library, composition studio and archive building. There is a large garden open to visitors with a mix of lawns, gravel paths and many flower beds to enjoy.

Full details of our opening hours, prices and special events throughout the year are available on our website at <https://brittenpears.org/visit/>. There is free entry for a carer/companion supporting a disabled person.

The site is wheelchair accessible for all the areas that are open (Composition and upstairs of the House are currently closed to the public). We have two wheelchairs available: a small lightweight indoor-only wheelchair for the House and a self-propelled wheelchair for all other areas including outdoor. Please ask a steward to use either. We also have 10 lightweight folding stools available in Reception for use in all indoor spaces.

Assistance dogs are welcome including inside the House. Water bowls can be provided and will be available on request in the courtyard.

There is no induction loop system or hearing collection at this time. We offer an audio guide for the site which is available to access using your own smartphone or a handset is provided. We recommend you bring your own headphones.

Staff and volunteers receive training in customer care and are available to offer assistance where needed. All staff and volunteers are aware of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard scheme, an initiative designed to act as a discreet sign if somebody has a hidden disability and require additional assistance while out in public.

We are very happy to make our information leaflets, maps and other documentation available in large print upon request. We also have digital resources that have been produced for special school visits.

People are welcome to take photos and videos for personal, non-commercial use. They must not take photos or film people without permission, must not use flash or tripods and observe signage indicating where photography and filming is not permitted.

We look forward to welcoming you at The Red House. If you have any queries or require any assistance in planning your visit, please phone us on 01728 451700 or email [info@brittenpears.org](mailto:info@brittenpears.org).

## Pre-arrival

For full details and maps on how to reach us please see the [Getting here](#) section of our website. This will give you details of how to access the site by car, bicycle, walking or public transport.

We recommend that visitors carry a small bag or handbag with them on site as there are no lockers available. A site-wide audio guide is available and can be accessed using a smart phone. You can also bring headphones if you wish.

The lane from the main road to The Red House is a private unmade single track with an uneven surface.

The main drive (1) and car parking areas are topped with shingle with painted lines to indicate parking spaces. The speed on the main drive is limited to 5mph.

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## Britten Pears Arts

+44(0)1728 451700

The Red House, Golf Lane, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5PZ

Britten Pears Arts is a registered charity no. 261383 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales No. 980281. VAT Registration No. 927 3330 30. Registered office: Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Snape, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 1SP.



1 Main entrance car park

### Car parking and entrance

Cycle racks (3) and a reserved blue badge parking space (4) are available in **car park 2** (2). A bonded gravel path leads from this car park down to Reception that is in the courtyard (5).



2 Car park 2 entrance



3 Cycle rack in car park 2



4 Blue badge parking space in car park 2



5 Level bonded gravel surface from car park 2

The drop-off point for taxis (6) is from the main drive which is connected to a bonded gravel surface. It then leads to a concrete path in the courtyard which leads to Reception (7).

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6 Bonded gravel path (right) in front of The Red House



7 Concrete path from main drive to Reception

Reception is approached via a shallow ramp (8) and is level throughout. On arrival you will be welcomed by a volunteer (9) and asked to wait until it is safe to enter the reception area. Please note that visitors are required to wear face coverings during their visit unless they are exempt as per the government guidelines. The Reception desk is to the left of the building next to a small sales area and Perspex screen (10). Once you have paid your ticket the volunteer at the welcome desk will offer information, maps and resources to accompany your visit.

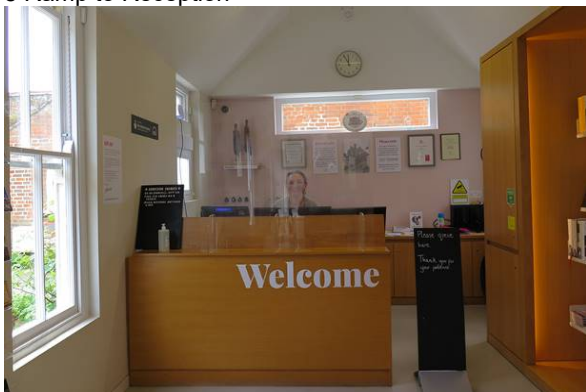
A fully accessible toilet is available in the toilet block at the opposite end (11) of the Reception desk. There are no adult changing facilities. There are two handrails by the toilet (12) and a horizontal wall mounted baby changing unit (13) in the fully accessible toilet room.



8 Ramp to Reception



9 Volunteer who will welcome you on arrival



10 Reception desk where you pay for your ticket and buy items from the shop



11 Entrance to the toilet block. Accessible toilet is on your right next to the window

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12 Toilet with handrails and help cord

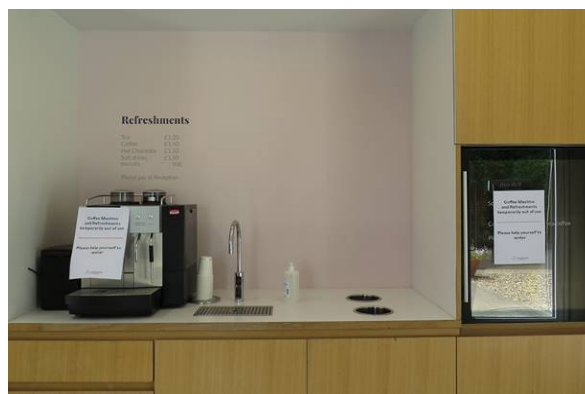


13 Baby changing unit in accessible toilet

There is limited seating (14) in Reception for visitors. There are currently no refreshments (15) available apart from a free water tap so do remember to bring your own water bottle. Where possible all doors will remain open for ease of travel across the site. Staff are also on hand to assist open doors or provide audio resources, wheelchairs and folding stools.



14 limited seating in Reception



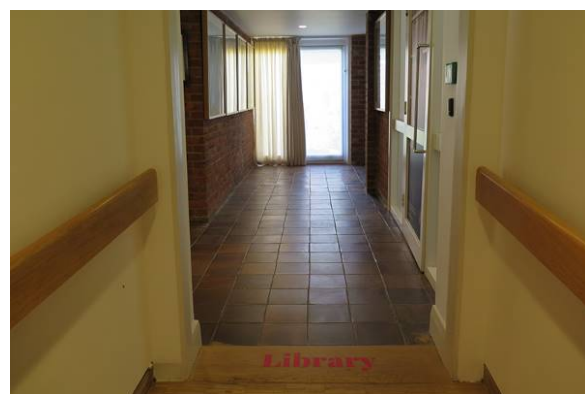
15 Only the water tap is available to visitors

## The Gallery

The gallery is accessed from a wide doorway with two doors in Reception and follows a one-way route (16). There is timber flooring and metal air vents which are level throughout, and displays are designed to be fully viewable from a wheelchair. The fire doors can be fixed open for wheelchair access into the gallery.



16 Timber flooring and metal air vents in the Gallery



17 Shallow slope with handrails to the Library

A new audio guide is available which offers highlights from the gallery. It can be accessed using your smart phone by scanning a QR code or typing website address on your smartphone. Stewards in

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Reception will go through this with you on arrival. Light levels are low to protect the collection and transcripts of diaries and letters on display may be available upon request.

There are two exhibitions within the gallery: the first about Britten's life and works, and another that changes every year. This year it is [Such an Artist to Write for](#). This exhibition area (17) leads up a shallow slope with handrails on both sides to the Library.

### The Library

The Library (18) was designed for Britten and Pears in 1964 on the site of an old cow shed, and is level throughout with a tiled floor. Please note that space is restricted within the room because of the layout of furniture and the piano. From here, you exit into the garden (19) through French doors and a ramp which leads on to grass.



18 View of Library from the entrance



19 Library exit leading into the garden

### The Red House

A former farmhouse, The Red House dates from the late seventeenth century with additions made in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and 1960s. The ground floor is open for viewing and the entrance is through the door on the porch (20). A ramp is available to access the main step from the path (21).



20 Entrance to The Red House



21 Ramp to front door of The Red House

The House is presented as it was in Britten and Pears' time with original carpets and other furnishings (22). The ground floor has a combination of tight corners, slopes, small door frames and narrow corridors that restrict the size of wheelchairs able to go in the House.

There is protective sheeting on the floors and we ask that visitors keep to the path (23). The dining (24) and breakfast (25) rooms are cordoned off and you can walk through the entrance hall, gallery (26) and drawing room (27). The exit is at the drinks room (28) where there is a small step down into the courtyard (29). The upstairs of the house is currently closed.

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22 Entrance hall



23 Corridor with plastic sheeting



24 Cordoned off Dining Room



25 Breakfast room with safety signs

A lightweight, clean wheelchair with a 46cm (18") wide seat is available for visitors who are unsteady on their feet or have a wheelchair that is too wide to get through the front door.

Conservation is important to us and we ask visitors to take care as they move through the House and to avoid touching objects. Visitors who are visually impaired or with special educational needs can be given specifically identified objects to handle by pre-arrangement.

There are guides in the entrance and drawing rooms to welcome you and answer any questions you have. If seating is required, please ask the room guides for assistance.



26 View of the gallery room in the House



27 Drawing room which leads to the drinks room exit

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28 Drinks room exit



29 Drinks room exit from the courtyard

### The Garden

The garden is viewable from various paths around the site. The paths are made of different materials including brick (30, 37), concrete (31, 35) gravel (32,33, 36) and grass (34). Many of the paths are wide enough for wheelchairs and mobility scooters and the lawns may also be passable in good weather conditions. Please note that some areas are uneven and gravel and grass in places may require effort to cross and have puddles in wet weather.

There are terraces and steps in the garden and where possible hand rails have been added.

A wheelchair is available upon request from Reception.



30 View of the House from the tennis lawn



31 Concrete area off the courtyard



32 Gravel area by the rose terrace



33 narrow path that leads into the croquet lawn

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34 Grassy area by the orchard



35 The pond which is surrounded by concrete paving



36 Gravel path by the kitchen garden and Archive



37 Red brick path that connects the House and Archive

### **Composition Studio**

As with the first floor of the house, the composition studio (on the first floor of the adjacent building) is closed to the public at this time.

### **The Archive**

The Archive is linked to the main site by a level brick path with a gentle slope into the building itself. It is currently closed for visitors at this time.

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