

Kensington Palace access guide 2010

Please note: This information is current as of 4 February 2010. Kensington Palace will undergo a major redevelopment project commencing in 2010 and finishing in 2012. Therefore, information and routes are subject to change without notice. Please check our website for updates. The palace will be **closed** 8-25 March 2010 inclusive for the installation of our new exhibition, *Enchanted Palace*.

The site

Kensington Palace is a historic building. There are approximately thirty rooms open to the public on three floors. There is currently no lift. Visits last approximately 1.5 hours. Assistance dogs are permitted in the Palace.

Access to the Palace

The Palace is approximately a 10 minute walk from Queensway station (Central line) and 15 minutes from Bayswater, High Street Kensington, and Notting Hill Gate stations (all District and Circle lines; Notting Hill Gate also Central line). Vehicular access to the Palace is via the Orme Square Gate, off of Bayswater Road. Please note that in the winter, the only exit after 16.00 is via a turnstile at the Orme Square Gate. There is no exit towards Kensington High Street.

Admission

Disabled visitors are admitted at the concession rate (£11.00 until 28 February 2011). Carers are admitted free of charge. Please inform the admissions staff when purchasing your tickets. These tickets can be purchased over the phone or in person.

Staff

If you have any queries or require any assistance, please ask a Front of House Warder who will be happy to assist you.

Visitors with sight difficulties

Visitors with sight difficulties should be aware that, for conservation reasons, many of the rooms have low light levels. There are many fragile items on display which unfortunately cannot be touched. However, there are a few tactile displays in the Royal Ceremonial Dress

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Collection. Additionally, there is the opportunity to handle objects from our collections on a room describers tour of the State Apartments. These tours are conducted by trained Front of House staff and are available on the following dates in 2010:

Thursday, 4 March

Friday, 9 April

Thursday, 6 May

Friday, 4 June

Friday, 2 July

Thursday, 5 August

Friday, 3 September

Friday, 8 October

Friday, 5 November

Thursday, 2 December

Tours are suitable for a maximum of three partially-sighted visitors at a time (with carers). For conservation reasons, we are limited to one tour per month. At least one weeks notice must be given for these tours (although as much notice as possible would be appreciated). Tours can be booked by email at kensingtontours@hrp.org.uk.

Visitors with mobility difficulties

Wheelchairs are available on a first-come, first-served basis and are for indoor use only. There is step-free access to the first and ground floors. There is currently no lift.

Access to 'The last debutantes' exhibition is extremely limited. The exhibition begins on the lower-ground floor, where there is step-free access via a ramp to the Lower Hall, Vestibule, and Garden Room of Apartment 1a. The Entrance Hall, Drawing Room, where there is a display of dress, and Study, all of which are located in Apartment 1a, are only accessible via a staircase consisting of four steps. The exhibition continues upstairs on the first floor landing. There is no step-free access to this area. The final room of 'The last debutantes' is located on the ground floor. There is step-free access to this room, as well as the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection and the display 'Diana, fashion and style', via a ramp leading from the lower-ground floor to the ground floor. The State Apartments are situated on the 2nd floor and are accessible via the Queen's Staircase. This is a shallow staircase consisting of three sets of ten steps. There are window seats on the top of the landing. The Orangery is wheelchair accessible. A ramp to the gift shop is available upon request. Please note that for health

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and safety reasons, staff are unable to assist in carrying wheelchairs. We also request that all members of a party containing visitors with mobility issues remain together, as they may require further assistance in the event of an emergency. Please be aware that in the winter, Kensington Gardens closes before the palace and exit is via a turnstile.

Visitors with hearing difficulties

Transcripts for the interviews featured in 'The last debutantes' exhibition are also available upon request. Tours in British Sign Language are offered once a month at 2pm. The 2010 dates are as follows:

Thursday, 18 February

Friday, 23 April

Friday, 21 May

Thursday, 17 June

Friday, 16 July

Thursday, 19 August

Thursday, 16 September

Thursday, 21 October

Friday, 19 November

Friday, 17 December

These tours are conducted by a member of Front of House staff with the assistance of an interpreter. Tours must be pre-booked at least 2 weeks in advance either over the phone ((18001) 0844 482 7777) or by email (kensingtontours@hrp.org.uk).

Seating

Seating is available throughout the Palace.

Toilets

Toilets are available in the gift shop and near the Orangery. Both are wheelchair accessible.

Parking

We offer parking on-site for disabled visitors. This must be pre-booked with the Kensington Palace Control Room on 020 3166 6199. Parking is located by the Orangery, approximately a 2 minute walk from the Palace. The Palace is accessed via Orme Square Gate, off Bayswater Road. The Palace's post code is W8 4PX. Please note that in winter, Kensington Gardens closes before the palace. Therefore, all vehicles must be off-site by 16.00.

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