

Wisley Gardens, Surrey

Information dated 2012, from www.accessinlondon.org
For a summary of the abbreviations used see under *Methodology*

Wisley Gardens

A3, Woking, Surrey, GU23 6QB Tel: 0845 260-9000

website: www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley

The Royal Horticultural Society Gardens are about 10km north of Guildford off the A3, and are well signed. **They can only be approached from the northbound side of the road.** Tarmaced CP with more than thirty BB spaces near the entrance. The main CP is very large with an uneven surface in places, and if it's crowded, you could be more than 300m from the entrance. Wheelchairs and five Batricars are available. In the summer you may have to book a powered buggy a week or two in advance.

Significant admission charge.

The gardens have been well set up for disabled visitors, although the 'accessible' toilets were designed and installed some years ago, to standards that have been superceded.

Step-free entrance to the site which is spread out over 240 acres (96ha).

More than half the gardens are readily wheelchair accessible and the map shows the step-free paths, and where there are slopes. Some paths are smooth tarmac while others are a bit rougher. There are places where you can go over the grass. The map available at the ticket office includes some access information, although it does not show where there are steps. For example, at the start of the route there are about a dozen steps to the left, and at the end of the canal, alongside the building, there are $\pm 8 \pm 8$ steps. All can be bypassed.

Broadly speaking, the northern part of the gardens is fairly flat while the southern part is hilly. A visit could take you along any distance from about 0.5km upwards, and you will encounter some slopes. Most chair users will need a pusher (unless your chair is powered !). It's not a bad idea to do some of the hilly parts first and then to wheel gently downwards towards the restaurant.

The Glasshouses are well worth visiting. Inside these there is a steepish ramped route up from the cooler house into the tree top level in the temperate house. There's an alternative way of getting up to this level using a well hidden lift, which is located near the entrance to the temperate house from the Perennial Meadow. As you come into the building go under the dark archway to your left and just round the bend you will find the lift.

In parts of the gardens, there are not many seats.

The café/restaurant and gift shop are both step-free throughout.

There are **accessible toilets** around the site:

- from the CP before the ramps/steps leading up to the Café/Shop/Garden entrance or if you come up to that level first, they are to the right down the slope about 30m. The **wheelchair toilet (D90 ST300)** with BCF is in a separate building and is exceptionally spacious;
- just past the Model Gardens (4) and on the left are two **adapted toilets (D75 ST55)** with separate BCF;
- near the Glasshouse there is an accessible toilet with BCF, but when we visited there was a queue and we did not see it;
- behind the café/restaurant, and past the patio area, there is a **wheelchair toilet (D80 ST80)**. There are separate BCF in both the mens and womens toilets;
- the 'accessible' toilet shown near the canal should more properly be described as one having BCF, since the cubicle is somewhat narrow and congested.