

Location: Lansdown Hall & Gallery  
Lansdown  
Stroud  
Gloucestershire  
GL5 1BB

Date of visit: 25<sup>th</sup> Septmeber 2018

### **Parking**

There are 5 designated disabled parking bays located outside of the Lansdown Hall, where you can park for free for 3 hours with a blue badge. However, there is no lowered kerb on either side of the road so these are no good for somebody in a wheelchair or using a walking aid.

The closest car park is Church Street Public car park, this is a short stay car park and you can park for 2 hours with a blue badge. This journey took approx. 10 minutes in a wheelchair and involves a hill which could be difficult for somebody using a manual chair or a walking aid.

I also visited the Merrywalks Shopping Centre car park which is close by, they were doing work to the car park and we couldn't find the disabled bays.

### **Accessibility**

#### Gallery

There is a ramp leading to the entrance and a bell at the door for disabled guests to ring if the door is shut. I rang the bell and somebody came to assist within seconds. There was a display at the top of the ramp which was an obstruction in the pathway for my wheelchair. Once inside the door there was a chair obstructing the pathway to the toilets.

Access within the gallery is good, there is lots of open space and lighting is bright.

For the current exhibition there was a book for people to write their comments in about the art work, this was on a tall block table and too high for somebody in a wheelchair.

#### **Toilet**

There is a disabled toilet located at the end of the building through an archway, there is no clear signage from the gallery until you get through the archway and there is a sign which is high up and out of eyeline for a wheelchair user.

Inside the toilet is a wide spacious room with enough room to turn around in and non-slip flooring. The toilet is for right-hand transfer and there are adequate hand rails for transfer. Underneath the paper towel dispenser are two bins which make it difficult to reach for a wheelchair user. The soap dispenser, sink and toilet roll dispenser are all at adequate height.

#### Hall

When arriving at the main entrance to the venue which is downstairs in the gallery, there is no signage to indicate how you get upstairs to the hall if you are a wheelchair user. There are stairs to the side of the building inside but no lift, there is access to the hall for wheelchair users, but you are required to leave the venue and walk through the bank gardens which takes approx. 5 minutes. There is no signage from the ground floor explaining this route.

This takes you to the back of the building and to the second floor where you can enter through a fire exit door. This door can only be opened from the inside, so you would need to notify somebody of your arrival to ensure it is open if you are unable to use the stairs. Lansdown Hall recommend calling in advance if you have special requirements, so they can ensure to accommodate you as best as possible.

I visited when the hall was empty which is when it is used for classes etc, however they can fill it with up to 135 seats for performances. There is 1.05cms left either side of the walkway and down the middle leaving plenty of space for a wheelchair to navigate through. Wheelchair users would be placed at the front of the venue and 2 seats are removed in the place of one wheelchair.

The only access to the stage is via stairs at the front or the back of the stage, making it inaccessible for performers in wheelchairs.

### **Toilet**

It is a tight doorway to navigate into the toilet, the toilet is a right hand transfer and all other facilities are at an adequate height for a wheelchair user. It is wide enough to turn around if the bins are kept in the corners of the rooms which one bin was not.

### **Recommendations**

- Put in a request for two dropped kerbs on the pavements where the disabled bays are, this would be extremely beneficial for less able-bodied people when visiting the Lansdown Hall. The walk from the local car parks are not ideal for somebody that is not able to walk or able to walk very far.
- Better sign posting from the car park to the hall, we needed to use a map on our phone to find the venue which not everybody has access to.
- No signs or displays in walkways
- A lowered table which is accessible for a wheelchair to sit underneath would be useful for the comments book in the gallery.
- Clear sign from the gallery to the toilets, sign around the corner is too high.
- Bins would be better placed underneath/to the right of the baby changing unit in disabled toilet close to the wall.
- Only having the one toilet in the gallery for disabled and non-disabled guests is not ideal, another gender neutral, regular toilet would be preferred. People with disabilities can feel pressured if there is a queue of people waiting to use the toilet and would not be able to go. Some people using a disabled toilet use it because they are not able to wait in a queue. We understand another toilet may not be viable, perhaps a sign on the door to encourage people that do not need the disabled toilet, to use the toilets upstairs explaining why.
- Clear signage inside and outside the building on the first floor and a simple map explaining how to get to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor if you are unable to use the steps.
- A lift would be preferable in the building, however the walk around is not unacceptable.
- A ramp installed at the front of the stage to make it inclusive for disabled performers.
- A lowered section at the bar to order and pay for a drinks for a wheelchair user