



# **Access Statement for Helmshore Mills Textile**

**2021/22**

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This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with access needs, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer all our visitors.

## **1. Introduction**

- The museum is situated in a semi-rural location, in the centre of the village of Helmshore, nr Haslingden.
- The site is located at the bottom of the large valley floor with no marked level variations on approach.
- There is an onsite car park with designated parking bays.
- There are two wheelchair lifts as well as the general lift.
- There are two access ramps.
- There are hearing loops (both fitted and a portable unit).
- There is a wheelchair loan facility.
- There is an accessible toilet.
- There is large print menu/events information.
- The cafe caters for special dietary needs and allergies

## **2. Pre-Arrival**

- The nearest railway station is Rawtenstall, tourist line operated by East Lancashire Railway, 3.7 miles away.
- The local bus services are the X41 (Manchester – Helmshore – Accrington) & the 481 (Blackburn – Haslingden – Rawtenstall), which alight on Broadway near Gregory Fold (about 800m away but with in parts, a very steep approach) and are mainly half hourly, as well as the 11 (Helmshore – Rawtenstall circular), which alights on Holcombe Road (about 100m from the property) and is hourly. All the buses are accessible.
- The streets in the surrounding area are generally flat tarmac surface/paved flags.
- The events leaflet information and prices, as well as the cafe menu is available in large print, staff are also happy to read aloud any information required.

## **3. Car Parking and Arrival**

- There are 51 car parking bays (including 1 disabled), and 3 coach bays on site with street parking nearby.
- All parking is free.
- The entrance is 8m (26ft) from the car parking area.
- There is 1 disabled bay 8m (26ft) from the main entrance.

- The surfaces from the car park to main entrance is level tarmac leading to a stone flagged entrance.
- There is no dedicated low-level car park lighting but the car park is adjacent to the main road street lighting and there is also the external high-level lighting for the site, which illuminates the car park.
- The route is clear and open access to the main entrance.
- There is ample space for coaches and cars to drop off visitors at the main entrance.
- The outer front doors are left open when the museum is open to the public.
- The inner doors are manual push-button, electrically operated opening away from the user. The clear open width is 94cm (3ft 1in).
- There are no steps to the main entrance, access is level.
- There is also access through the cafe door; entrance is level through a manually operated inward opening door, width 120cm (4ft).

#### **4. Main Entrance, Reception and Ticketing Area**

- The reception/ticket area is on the ground floor, with a level entrance from the outside entrance.
- All the reception area is level flooring.
- Limited seating is available close to the reception area.
- The flooring of the reception/ticket area is non slip vinyl; the shop area is short-pile carpet.
- The reception is well lit, with a combination of ceiling spots/round fluorescent lights.
- There is a low counter desk area suitable for wheelchair users.
- The reception is open plan designed with Perspex screens (fitted as part of our Covid secure measures).
- Accompanying carers are given free entry.
- There is a hearing loop system with associated signage.
- Pen and pad of paper, as well as wheelchair loan are available.

#### **5. Attraction (displays, exhibits etc.)**

- Interpretation used on the site consists of text panels, interactive displays, videos (all with hearing loops and some with subtitles), as well as live talks and demonstrations for the historic machinery.
- All interpretation boards/panels have been designed to follow recommended font/size and contrast guidelines.
- Some of the videos have background music outside the main scripted sections.
- There are no flashing lights as part of the displays.

- The largest door opening widths throughout the facility is 135cm (4ft 6in) the smallest door width is in the TV auditorium/studio 77cm (2ft 6in) staff are assigned in designated areas to assist visitors with any assistance required.
- There is limited seating available throughout the attraction.
- The surfaces on the floors are a mix of wood, carpet, and non-slip vinyl. The main stairs are stone and the ground floors of the mill do have some areas of uneven stone flags.
- The display areas are well lit with ceiling spots, and round fluorescent lights.

## **6. Public Toilets**

- The public WCs are situated next to the lift and less than 5m from the reception/ticket desk.
- There is an accessible unisex toilet available, located on the opposite side of the lift to the main public toilets. This toilet is only ever locked (by the occupant) when it is in use.
- Main public toilets are situated on the ground floor with 2 steps to access. The unisex accessible toilet has a level entry for wheelchair access.
- The door entrance width to the accessible WC is 95cm (3ft). The door entrance to the main WC is 80cm (2ft 6in).
- The space for a wheel chair in the accessible WC is on the left side of the WC, the width is 60cm (2ft).
- The height of the seat from floor in the accessible WC is 48cm (1ft 7in).
- In the accessible WC there are 2 vertical rails at each side of the wash basin, 1 horizontal rail on the left side of the WC, a horizontal fold down, and vertical rail on the right side of WC, and a horizontal rail on the back of the toilet door.
- Toilets are checked by staff (as part of the evacuation procedure) in cases of an emergency, such as fire alarm activations.
- There is inside the accessible WC a red alarm cord (full length i.e. down to floor level) fitted near the toilet, and the alarm will be visible/audible above the toilet door as well as at reception, which is always staffed during open hours.
- The toilet is well lit with round fluorescent lights.
- The flooring is non slip vinyl.
- The tap in the accessible WC is a lever operated mixer and the others are push button operated hot and cold taps.

## **7. Catering**

- The cafe is adjacent to the main reception and is accessed down a slight slope with hand rails at each side. There is alternative level access through a manually operated inward opening door, situated at the rear of the cafe, which offers access direct off the car park.
- The main entry door width is 94cm (3ft 1in), the rear cafe door width is 120cm (4ft) the ramp width is 110cm 3ft 6in) there are clear passage ways all around.

- The area is a flat level tiled floor with good access for wheel chairs and pushchairs all-round.
- There is a small easy chair area, standard table height is 28cm (2ft 4in) with armless chairs.
- Low serving counter 80cm (2ft 6in).
- The cafe is well lit with overhead bulb lighting.
- The main floor surface is ceramic floor tiles.
- The cafe provides home cooked food (therefore full knowledge of ingredients used), vegetarian options are available, nuts are not used on the premises, and there are gluten free bread/biscuits available.
- Orders are usually placed at the counter and the food brought out to the customer, however staff are able to take orders from the table if deemed necessary.
- The menu is available on a blackboard, large print, and can be read out by staff.
- Crockery contrasts in colour with the table surfaces.
- The nearest toilets and accessible WC is 16m (52ft) from the café.

## **8. Shop**

- The shop is an open plan area adjacent to the main reception, with level access all-round.
- The door width is 94cm (3ft 1in).
- The area is open plan with all-round access for pushchairs and wheelchairs.
- There is a low counter area.
- The display racks are mainly wall fixed shelved display cases, with some free-standing display units, tables and spinners. There is no low level/floor level display and most of the stock is available within reach if seated in a wheelchair.
- There is no background music.
- There is a hearing loop system fitted at reception, as well as a portable hearing loop system.
- Staff will happily assist if required.

## **9. Grounds and Gardens**

- There is an eating area outside the cafe (weather permitting) with tables and chairs, benches in the car park, a grassed area at the opposite end of the car park, walking areas around the mill pond which powers the waterwheel, and an outside courtyard area between the two mills, with seasonal picnic tables (weather permitting).
- The areas around the mill pond are mainly flat but uneven, the picnic/bench seating areas around the car park have level access.
- The areas have open access and the paths are not smaller than the door widths of the main entrances.

- The paths around the mill pond are mainly flat, uneven gravel/soil and grass surfaces.
- The car park is flat, even tarmac.
- The area between the two mills is uneven in places, generally flat with cobbled incline leading to the rear entrance of higher mill.
- There is no regular seating around the outside grounds and gardens only where specified above.

## **10. Additional Information**

- Induction includes Disability Awareness Training; there is also equality and diversity training provided.
- When the fire alarms are activated there are visual signs and audible alarms.
- All staff are trained to assist and evacuate the buildings; there are in addition two evacuation chairs on site.
- Assistance dogs are very welcome; there is ample outdoor space for the dogs to use for toilet needs and water bowls are available.
- With regards signage, background colour is always in strong contrast to the text and the text font is never smaller than size 14. Pictograms are used in addition to text for facilities such as the toilets and on some of the emergency exit signs.
- There is no designated area where a mobility scooter or battery powered wheelchair can be charged, there are however three power points in the entrance/reception/shop area available.

## **Contact Information**

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