

Accessibility Guide for the Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret

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Welcome

Housed in the attic of the early eighteenth-century church of the old St Thomas' Hospital, this atmospheric museum offers a unique insight into the history of medicine and surgery. The original timber framed Herb Garret was once used to dry and store herbs for patients' medicines and in 1822 an operating theatre was included. Predating anaesthetics and antiseptics, it is the oldest surviving surgical theatre in Europe.

Watch the video: [Welcome to the Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret](#)

Address

9A St Thomas' Church
St Thomas' Street
London
SE1 9RY

At a Glance

Level Access

- The Museum is in the roof of St Thomas' Church.
- There is no level access from the street to St Thomas' Church.

Access with steps

- There are steps from the main Church Foyer Entrance to:
 - Shop
 - Herb Garret
 - Antechamber
 - Operating Theatre

Hearing & Audio

- We have 2 hearing loops available at the Welcome Desk.
- Ear defenders are available at the Welcome Desk.
- Some staff have disability awareness training.

Visual

- Some parts of the venue have low lighting.
- We have display information in braille and large print available at the Welcome Desk.
- We have an audio guide available on our website.

General

- While there are no displays with audio, some noise from outside the museum can be heard, especially during the weekend. We have ear defenders available for visitors.
- We have a concessionary rate for disabled visitors.
- We have a complimentary ticket policy for personal assistants.
- Some staff have disability awareness training.

Transport



Travel by public transport

- You can get to Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret by bus, train and boat:
- See Transport for London's website for timetables: <https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/timetables/>.

Bus

- The London Bridge bus station hosts the nearest bus stops. It is situated at the London Bridge tube and rail station. There are three stands at the station which are situated on the station forecourt. London Buses routes 17, 43, 141, 149, 388 and 521 serve the station. The bus station has shelters and seating areas.
- The London Bridge Bus Station is 0.2 miles / 0.3 km from Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret.
- Other bus stops can be found on the south side of London Bridge for routes 21, 35, 47, 133, N21, N133, N199. The bus stops have a shelter and seating area.

Train

- The nearest train station is London Bridge Train Station.
- The train station is 0.2 miles / 0.3 km from Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret.

Boat

- The nearest port is London Bridge City.
- The port is 0.5 miles / 0.8 km from Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret.



Travel by taxi

- You can get a taxi with Mason & Green by calling 020 7924 9177.



Parking

- There is a multistory car park in Kipling Street, SE1 3RU, that is a short walk from the Museum. See <https://www.ncp.co.uk/find-a-car-park/car-parks/london-bridge/>.
- There are no designated accessible parking spaces near the Museum.

- There are some paid-for on-street parking spaces along St Thomas' Street outside the Museum. These could also be used as a drop-off point.

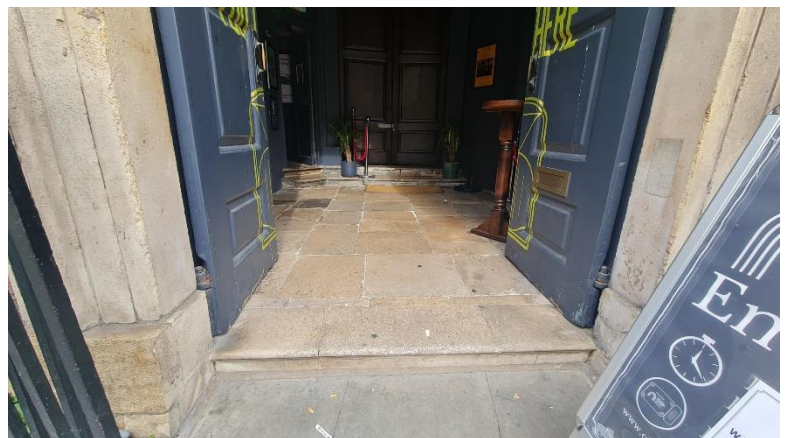


On street parking in St Thomas' Street. There is a charge for parking.

Arrival

Path to main Church Foyer entrance

- From the street to the main Church Foyer entrance, there is 1 step.
- There is no ramp and no lift.
- The width of the doorway into the Church Foyer entrance is 1680mm.



^ 1 step from the street to the Church Foyer entrance.

< View of route from street level to Church Foyer entrance.



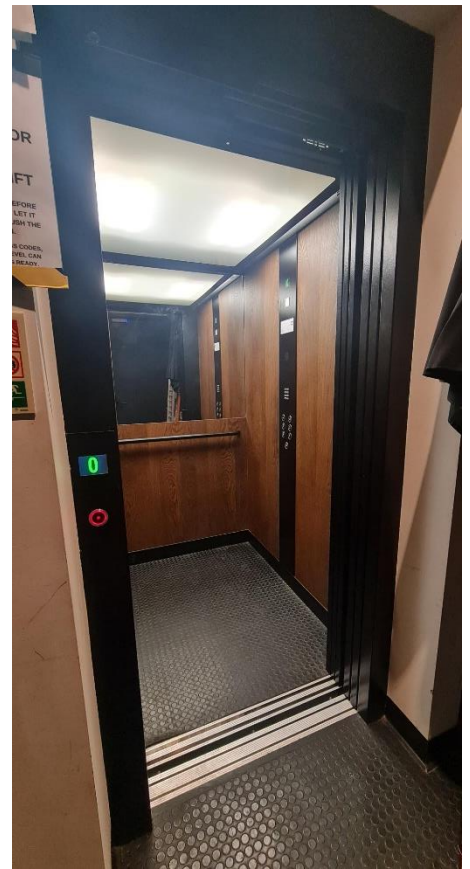
Main Church Foyer entrance

- The main entrance is the ground floor foyer of St Thomas' Church.
- From here, there is a small doorway to your left (signposted) that will take you to the Museum Shop, and from there, the Museum itself.
- There is a 52-step spiral staircase from this foyer to the Museum Shop.
- The stairwell has a rope handrail.
- The width of the doorway leading to the spiral staircase is 580mm.
- A traffic-light system is in operation to indicate when it is safe for people to proceed up the spiral steps.
- An alternative entrance where you do not have to use the spiral staircase is available via a small lift behind key-coded doors.

Getting around inside

Lift

- The lift dimensions are: 1000mm wide x 1300mm deep x 2000mm high, with a max weight of 400kg.
- The width of the doorway to the lift is 800mm.
- The lift buttons have raised numbers or letters.
- The lift shows the floor number, at each floor.
- The lift to the Museum Shop is the main route in and out of the Museum, apart from the spiral stairs.
- The lift is not for use by the general public as it is a small hydraulic domestic lift meant for infrequent use. However, staff are more than happy to escort visitors who require its use. Just contact us on info@oldoperatingtheatre.com or 020 7188 2679.



Shop

- Once you have entered via the 52-step spiral staircase or the lift, you will reach the Shop.
- Once in the Shop, the route through the shop is 800mm wide, or more.
- The Shop space also contains the combined information and ticket desk.



Things to See and Do

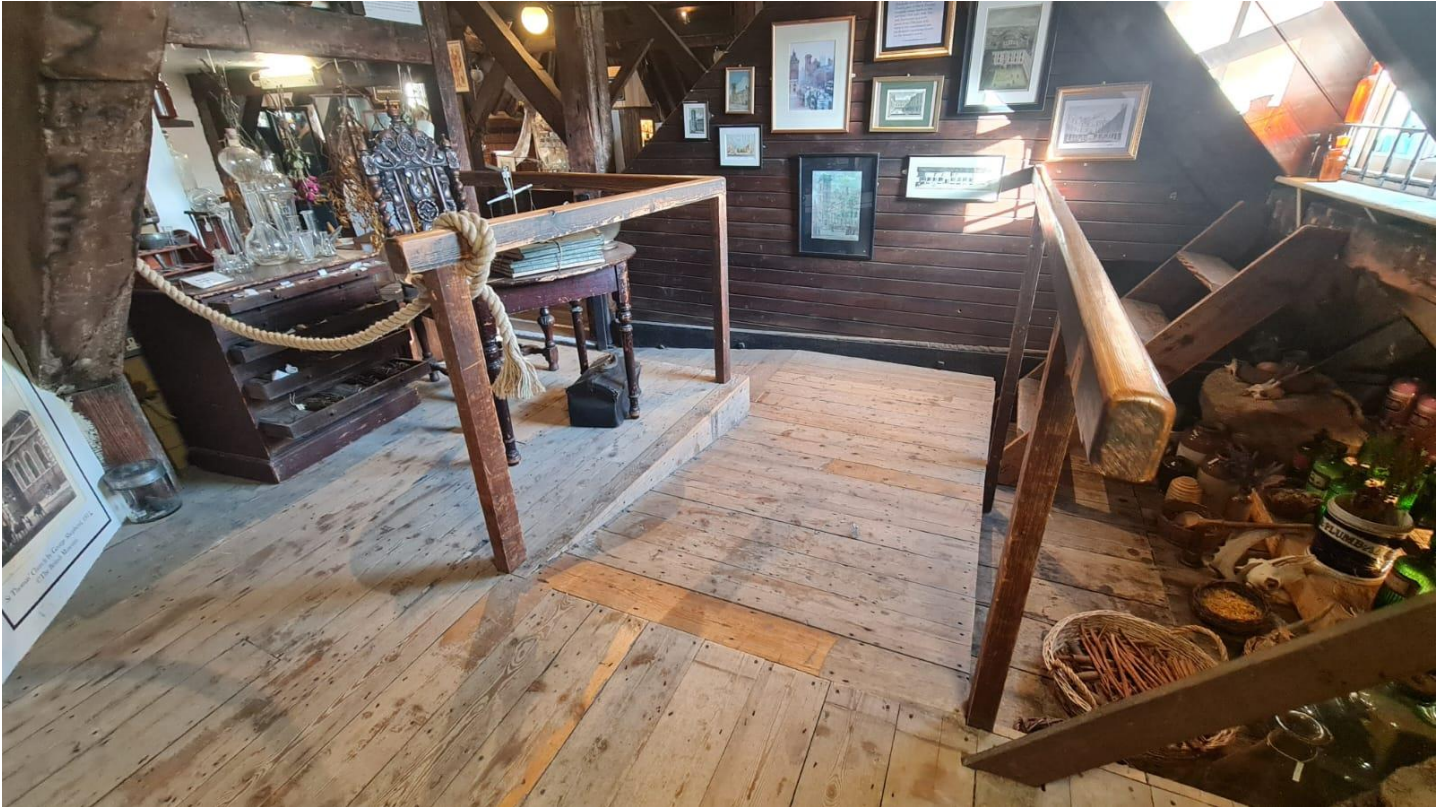
- We have a concessionary rate for disabled visitors at £6.00 per person.
- We have a complimentary ticket policy for personal assistants / carers.
- We have display information in audio and braille.
- We have a 360° virtual tour of the Museum available here:
<https://www.pan3sixty.co.uk/virtual-tours/old-operating-theatre/museum-virtual-tour.html>.
- We have an Augmented Reality experience via an app that can be downloaded on a smart device: <https://oldoperatingtheatre.com/mr-travers-augmented-reality-experience/>
- We have an audio tour that can be accessed via our website:
<https://oldoperatingtheatre.com/tour/>.

Herb Garret

- From the Museum Shop you enter the Herb Garret via a 'tunnel' that is 900mm wide.
- Immediately following this there is a tight corner with a small ramp of 680mm wide.



- Followed by another ramp at a right-angle with a handrail that leads you into the main floor of the space. This is 1080mm wide.



- Once in the Herb Garret space, the floor is an 18th Century uneven wooden floor, with three long beams protruding throughout.





- Some display information is at a low level.
- There are seats located in the dedicated 'Waiting Room' bay.
- Some parts of the venue have low lighting.



View of the herb garret space, with low lighting and some display case lighting.

Antechamber

- From the Herb Garret you enter the Antechamber via a choice of two doors, both with 1 step. The width of the doorway at the narrowest point is 800mm.



- There is a small, curved walkway which is 760mm wide at its narrowest point.
- There are also 2 further steps to view the final display case in this space.



- Some display information is at a low level.
- Some parts of the venue have low lighting.
- This is also the route to the fire exit, which has 5 steps. The width of the double doors of the fire exit is 1160mm,
- The fire doors open inward and are controlled by a maglock which can be deactivated using the green release button.

Operating Theatre

- From the Antechamber, there are two routes into the Operating Theatre.
- One route takes you to the side of the theatre and contains 2 steps down through a set of double doors at 1180 wide.



- The other route takes you into the back of the theatre and is via a narrow set of 10 steps that are 660mm wide.
- Some display information is at a low level. There is seating within the stands of the theatre itself. Cushions are available.
- There is a hearing loop in the Operating Theatre.





Accessibility equipment

- We have a hearing loop available for collection at the Shop.
- We have information in different languages.
- We have information in braille.
- We have an audio tour that can be accessed via our website: <https://oldoperatingtheatre.com/tour/>.
- We have a 360° virtual tour of the Museum available here: <https://www.pan3sixty.co.uk/virtual-tours/old-operating-theatre/museum-virtual-tour.html>.
- You can hire mobility equipment from Mobility Compare: <https://www.mobilitycompare.co.uk/>

Customer Care Support

- Some staff have disability awareness training.

Guide last updated: 6 March 2022