

## **Robert Burns Birthplace Museum facilities and access information**

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.

### **Visiting our site:**

The Robert Burns Birthplace Museum is based in Alloway, South Ayrshire and is the ideal place to explore both the man and his work. We welcome all visitors to our museum, and this statement lists the range of provisions we have made to ensure that every visitor has a great time when they visit us.

Our flagship museum encompasses sites across the village of Alloway, including:

The museum building which houses the collection, the shop and the café;



The Cottage where Robert Burns was born;



Alloway Old Kirk (made famous by Burns's poem Tam o' Shanter, where Tam saw the witches dancing!)





The Brig o' Doon (also famous from Tam o' Shanter, where Tam's horse Meg loses her tail);



Burns Monument and Monument gardens;





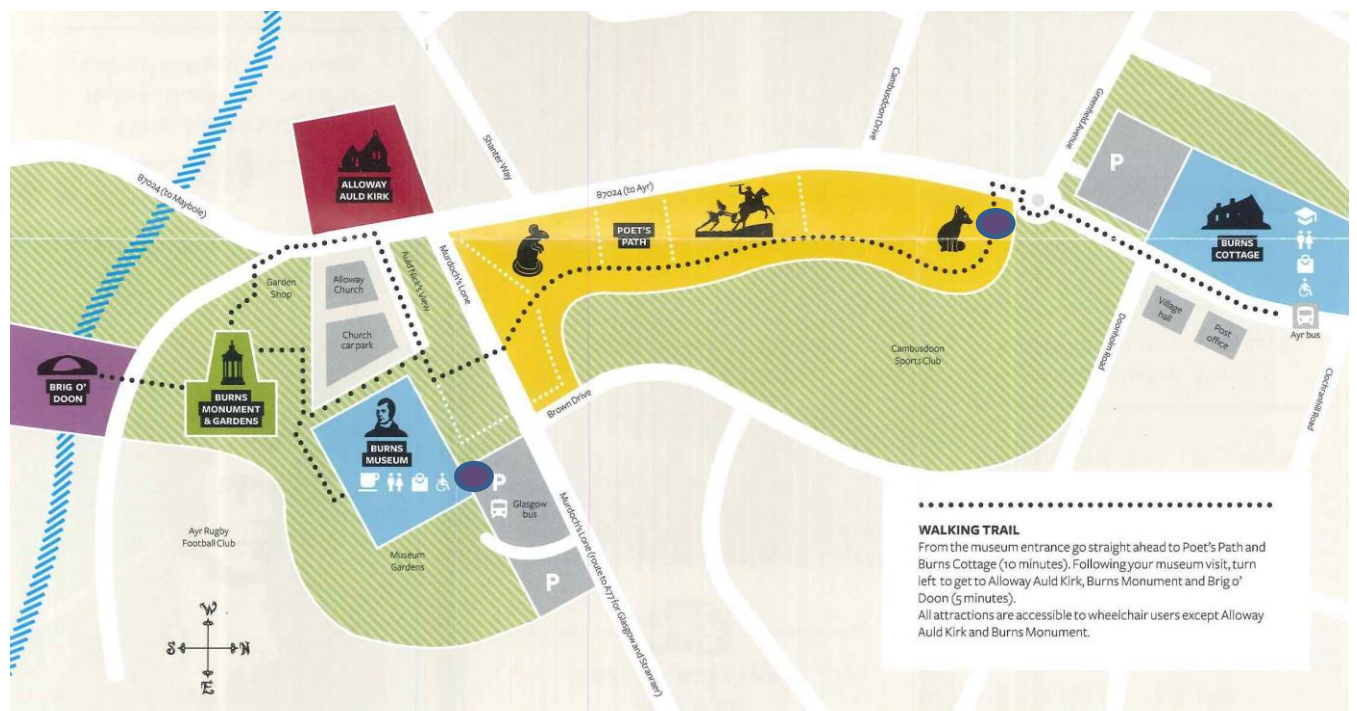


Poet's Walkway – a path which connects the museum and the Cottage and includes Burns related sculptures.





Here is a map of the site, and of how all our attractions link together. You will be given a larger copy of this when you visit the museum.



● - Buggy collection points

There are car parks at both the Museum and the Cottage which are free for our visitors to use and have disabled parking spaces. We have an Electric car charging point in the museum car park, for which donations are gratefully received. We have four bike racks outside the museum and cyclists are welcome to use our café.

The museum (as well as the shop and café) is all on one level, and comprises of the largest collection of Burns objects in the world, including original manuscripts, items which belonged to Burns and his family and friends, and objects associated with the Bard since his death. We have many interactive activities in the museum for visitors of all ages to enjoy.

Our café, and indeed our whole site, is breastfeeding and family friendly, and offers a range of homemade options which cater for a range of dietary requirements. We sell a wide range of products in the shop, including items from local suppliers and crafters.

The Birthplace Cottage is a ten minute walk, or 2 minute drive, away from the museum building. This consists of 4 rooms and is all on one level. Due to its historic nature, the Cottage has narrow doors, although these are suitable for most wheelchairs, and one room has a cobbled floor which makes navigation difficult (but not impossible!). You may find it easier to enter through the Kitchen door on the right hand side as you look at the Cottage (marked Exit Only) if you think the cobbles might be difficult.

If the weather is fine, you can bring a picnic and make use of our outside benches viewing the Cottage. Please note however that it is not possible to consume your own food at the museum.

During the summer months, we offer a free buggy service along the Poet's Path which links the Cottage and museum and runs most days. Please note that the Cottage is a further 5 minute walk from the buggy stop at the end of Poet's Path as the buggy cannot travel along roads.

Both the Education Pavilion at Burns Cottage and the foyer area at the Museum have disabled toilets, and there are baby changing facilities at the museum, but not the Cottage.

We run lots of special events and activities throughout the year so please check our website ([www.burnsmuseum.org.uk](http://www.burnsmuseum.org.uk)) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/RobertBurnsBirthplaceMuseum/>) for details, as well as What's on Boards distributed around our site.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone 01292 443 700 or email [burns@nts.org.uk](mailto:burns@nts.org.uk)

## Opening times and prices

The museum is open daily from:  
10.00 – 17.00

The Cottage is open daily from:

11.00 – 17.00 (last admission 16.30)

We will be closed from 12.30pm on the 24<sup>th</sup> December 2017, re-opening at 10am on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

You can buy tickets from either the museum reception desk or the Cottage kiosk:

NTS Members and Essential Carers: Free

Adult: £9.00

Concession (senior, student, child): £7.00

Family (2 adults): £22.00

Family (1 adult): £17.00

We are currently trialling accessible opening hours across the site, between 15.00 – 17.00 on the first Tuesday of every month. Cleaning lights will be turned on and audio visual elements of the museum switched off. While we cannot necessarily guarantee that this will be a quiet time from a visitor point of view, visitors who find the usual lighting and audio levels of the museum challenging may wish to visit during these hours.

## Entrance area and ticketing:

### Museum

Our entrance area has a revolving door, with wheelchair access to the left hand side. As you go through the doors, you will enter the shop. If you wish to visit our café, it is directly in front of you through the glass doors.



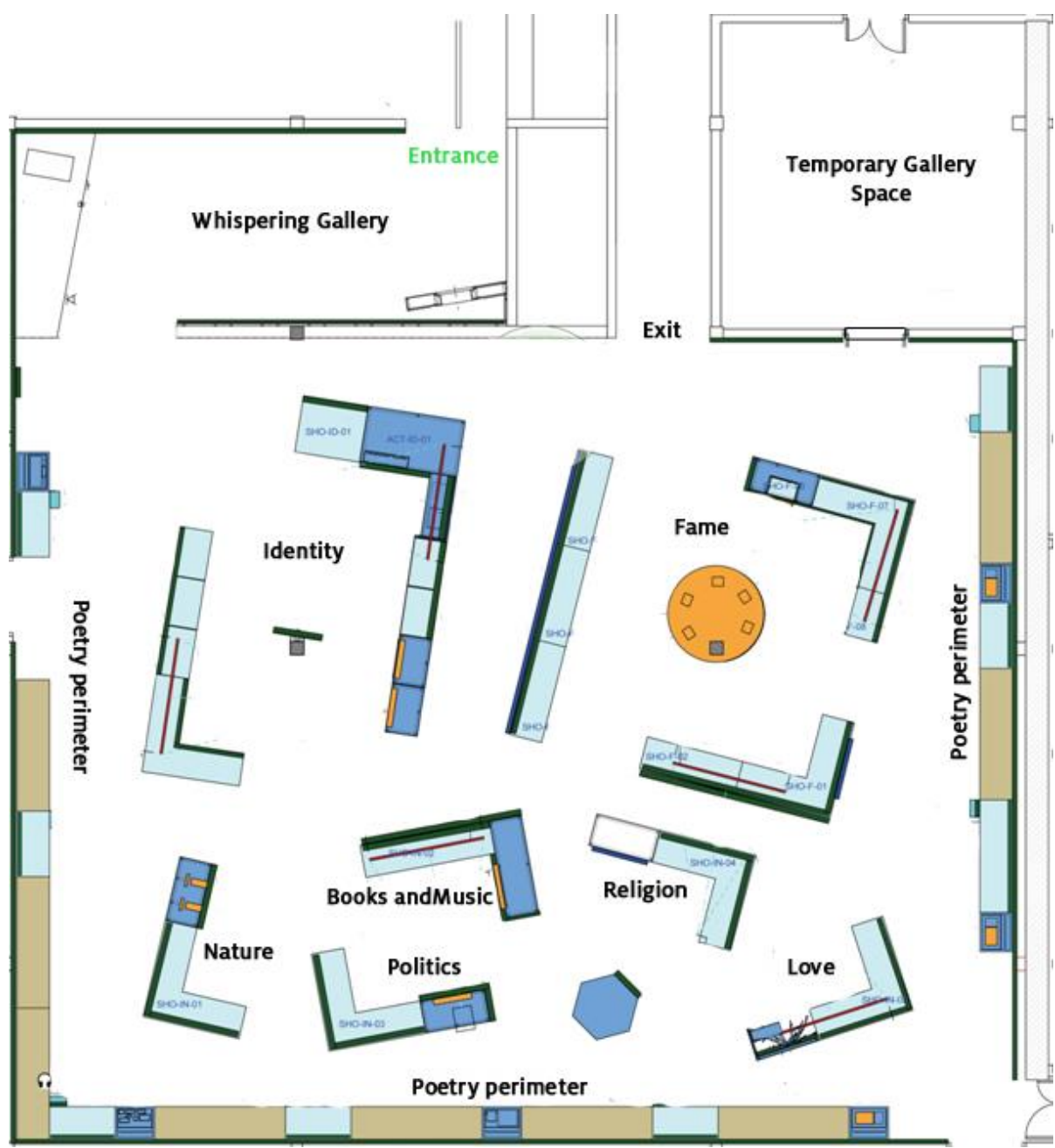
The Admissions Desk is to your right, and our staff will be on hand to help you with buying your tickets and finding out more information. The museum is accessible through a door to the right of the admissions desk, our staff will be able to tell you about all the different things you can do at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum and any special activities happening that day.





Our toilets, including a disabled toilet, are on the left hand side as you are walking towards the café. Our toilets have hand dryers which make a loud noise, except for our disabled toilet which has paper towels.

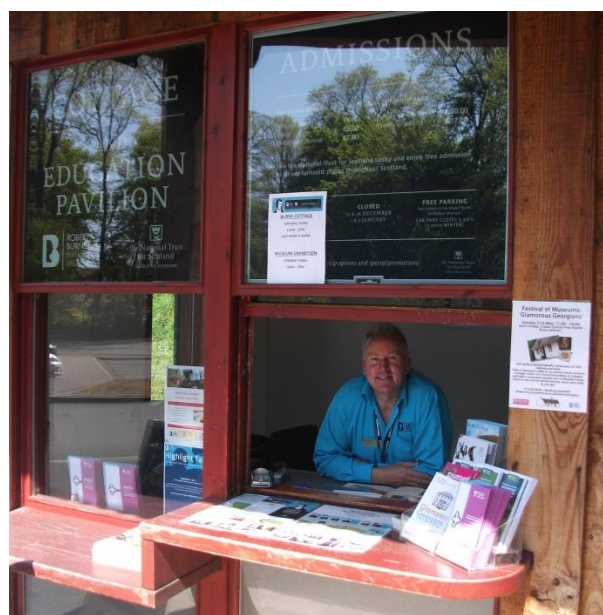
Our museum is divided into different themes relating to the life of Robert Burns. Here is a map of the museum layout. The map shows where you can find information relating to a specific theme of Robert Burns's life. We have large print versions of the labels in the museum, please ask at the admissions desk and our staff will be happy to help.



As our museum is all one room, there are no areas in particular which are quieter or noisier than others. There is soft seating (without armrests) around the sides of the museum, and portable folding stools which can be borrowed from inside the museum and used to sit on while viewing the exhibits.

## Cottage

Burns Cottage is accessible via a kiosk at the threshold of the car park. Tickets can be purchased here, and staff will be on hand to give you more information. If you have already purchased a ticket at the museum, please do still show this to the member of staff in the kiosk.





There is a shop at the Cottage which is open at weekends, 11.00 – 15.00.

Toilets, including a disabled toilet, inside the Pavilion building next to the Cottage, the next door along from the shop. Our toilets have hand dryers which make a loud noise.

Wheelchairs are available at both the Cottage and the museum on request, and guide dogs are welcome across the site.

**Essential carers are free from admission charges.**

## Questions and Answers

### 1. Is there somewhere to eat?

Yes, we have a café at the museum. We have a wide range of different options for our visitors including soup, sandwiches and paninis, hot meals (12.00 – 14.00), cakes/scones/pastries, healthy snacks, salads and hot and cold drinks. We offer gluten free and vegetarian options.

There are no catering facilities at the Cottage but if the weather allows you are welcome to bring your own picnic and use one of our benches! Please note that it is not possible to consume your own food at the museum.

### 2. Is there a shop?

Yes, we have a large shop at the museum which sells a range of different items to suit all requirements. We have Burns related products including books about him and CDs of his music, as well as products made by local crafters and a selection of Scottish themed goods. We have plenty of children's items available too.

There is also a small shop at the Cottage which is open at weekends, 11.00 – 15.00. Space in the Cottage shop is limited, but one wheelchair at a time can access the shop.

### 3. Will it be busy/noisy?

Our museum is very popular with visitors from all over the world, and we regularly have coach trips and school groups come and visit us. At these times, the museum and café/shop get busy and will be quite noisy, especially around lunchtime.

The museum itself has interactive screens and games which produce a noise, and if these are played at the same time they can be heard around the museum. This can mean different sounds can be heard at the same time. A Burns song or poem is played every hour from overhead screens, at this point the museum lights dim down. You can check with staff at the front desk who will be able to let you know roughly what times this will happen.

Our café is often busy during the middle part of the day. It has low lighting levels and can be noisy.

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### 4. Are there quieter times?

As a general rule, our museum is quietest before 11am and after 4pm. If you would prefer not to visit during our busy midday period then these times will generally be suitable. We cannot guarantee that we won't have a special booking for these times however, but you are welcome to call ahead and check on the day of your visit.

The Cottage opens at 11.00 and is usually quietest between then and 12.00. Our school visits are most common January – March and our coach trips are



most common in the summer/autumn, therefore November and early December may be quieter months to visit the site.

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## 5. How will I know who to ask if I have a question?

Our RBBM Front of House team staff wear turquoise shirts with black sleeveless fleeces over the top. They will be happy to answer any questions you have about the day.

## 6. Will the museum be dark?

Our museum houses the most significant collection of Burns objects in the world. Many of these are old manuscripts or letters and are very sensitive to light. If they are exposed to too much light, they will fade and visitors will no longer be able to enjoy them. For this reason, the museum lighting needs to be kept low. We appreciate that this will be difficult for some of our visitors but hope they understand that this is necessary to conserve these precious objects for future generations.

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7. If I get tired or over-stimulated, can I leave the museum and come back later?

Yes – your ticket is valid for 3 days from the date of purchase, and you can come and go as often as you please. So don't worry if you want to take in our site at a slower pace and take breaks during your visit!

8. Does the museum always stay the same?

Our main collection will usually be the same, but some of our objects will occasionally be out on loan, and we sometimes put new objects into the museum so that people can see different items. We do have a temporary exhibition which changes every few months, so please check our website for further details. We will also change displays in our shop or put new items on the café menu from time to time, but the general layout of the museum will always be as it is!

9. Can I see the whole site if I am in a wheelchair?

You can access the Birthplace Cottage, and the museum and all its facilities with a wheelchair, as well as the monument gardens. The monument garden paths are sloped and some have gravel surfaces.

The Brig o' Doon is situated at the bottom of a fairly steep road with narrow pavements, and is cobbled. Alloway Auld Kirk is accessible only by steps, but can be viewed well from the roadside.

Please note that a busy road runs between our two sites. You will need to cross the road at both Alloway Auld Kirk and Burns Cottage. There are traffic islands at both of these to assist your crossing.

Wheelchairs are available from both the Cottage and Museum if required. During the summer, we run a free buggy shuttle service most days from one end of the Poet's walkway to the other. Please note that there is a 5 minute walk from the end of Poet's Path to Burns Cottage. The buggy service



collects from directly outside the museum.

## 10. What other measures are in place for people with specific access needs?

Exhibition and education areas at the museum are fitted with a hearing loop. We offer information in large print and guide dogs are welcome across the site. All of our talks, lectures and events are on the ground floor and therefore wheelchair and buggy friendly. We have highchairs available in our café for small children.

## 11. What if I have any other questions?

You can speak to any member of staff during the day on your visit and they will be happy to help you with your question. If you think there should be a question in this access statement that hasn't been covered, or have any further feedback to make about this document, please email [abeckett@nts.org.uk](mailto:abeckett@nts.org.uk)

## **Future plans!**

At the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, staff are always striving to make every visitor's experience memorable. We are currently undergoing Makaton training, trialing accessible opening times, and hope to create autism friendly education activities. We will keep you updated with any developments.

