



Museum Spaces Sensory & Trigger Awareness

Registered Charity Number 1030554

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Museum Spaces





Our Grade II listed building is very old!

There are areas that are worn and uneven, narrow and low and darker or lighter, and we are limited as to the adaptations we can make to the building. This guide highlights key sensory and trigger considerations around the building that may affect some of our visitors and and aims to:

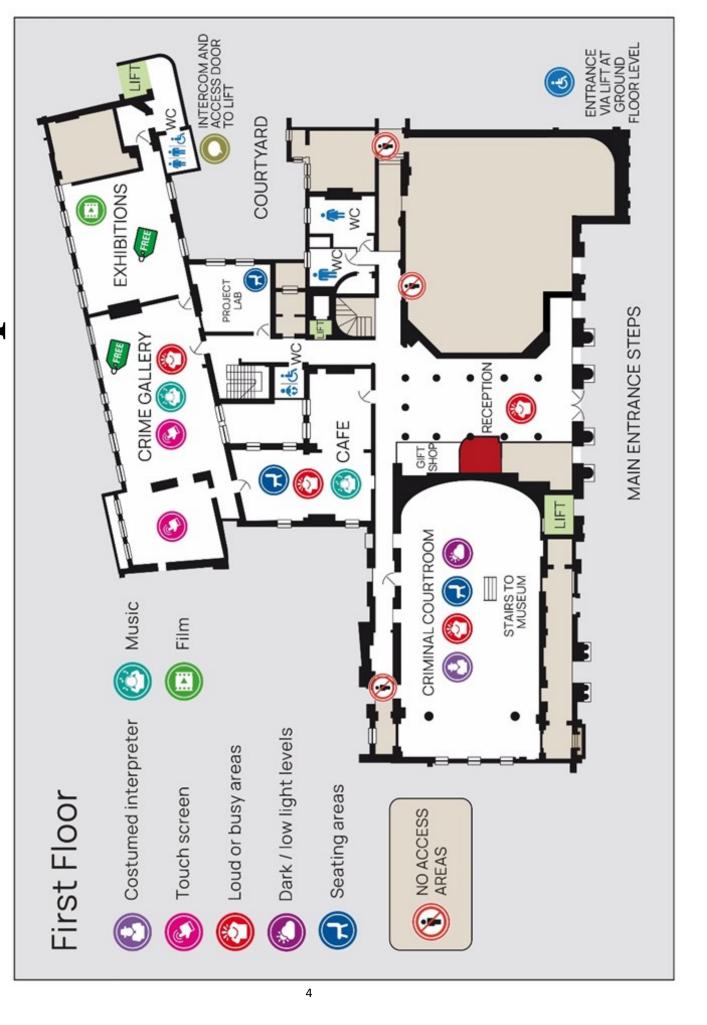
- Prepare you for entering and working in spaces around the museum.
- Highlight potential sensory triggers that could affect the people you are working with.
 - Provide awareness of these so you can support the people you are working with.



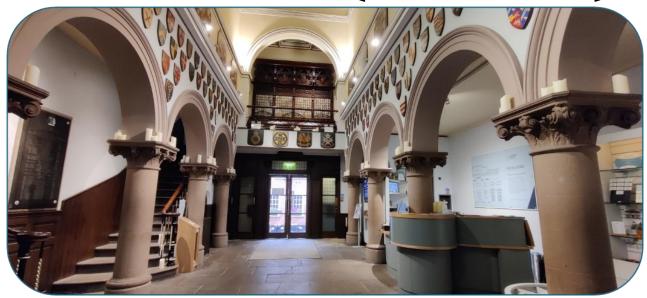
Quick Step Guide

Location	Steps	Location	Steps
Into Museum from road	10	Dungeon to exercise yard	5
To lunch rooms from reception	25	Exercise yard to Georgian cells	5
To youth court from reception	10	County gaol stairs	16
Next to free exhibit	15	Night cell to women's	20
To laundry from courtyard	24	Night cell to exercise yard	18
From laundry to dungeon	15	Dungeon stairs walk	~30 sec

First Floor Map



Shire Hall (Entrance)





Lighting	Bright and consistent lighting, glass doors enter into this room and it is well lit with artificial lighting at all times.
Flooring	Flooring is uneven, hard and cold, it is made of flag stones and can be unpredictable underfoot.
Noise	There is a lot in this room which dampens the noise a little but as it is so large it can be loud and echoey, you can also hear the café noises which is right ahead of you as you enter.
Other	Very high ceiling and large space overall, which can be intimidating. The room is very colourful with a lot of colourful artworks on shields placed around the upper sides of the room.

Criminal Courtroom





Lighting	Mostly even, mix of cold and warm bulbs, furniture creates lots of shadows. No notable dark areas.
Flooring	Floor is solid and flat but there are lots of steps, some of which are hidden. There is a staircase in the centre of the room. Shadowy areas can be difficult to gauge for people with impaired depth perception.
Noise	Very echoey room. You can hear people in the corridor. You can hear people below the courtroom when you are near the dock.
Other	Rooms were designed to be intimidating and so some guests may feel uncomfortable in some areas, especially the docks. Often very warm. The rooms have very high ceilings.

Courtrooms Civil, Criminal and Youth







Lighting	Mostly even, mix of cold and warm bulbs, furniture creates lots of shadows. No notable dark areas.
Flooring	Floor is solid and flat but there are lots of steps, some of which are hidden. There are staircases in the youth court in the dock Shadowy areas can be difficult to gauge for people with impaired depth perception.
Noise	Very echoey rooms and you can hear people the corridor through the door. You can sometimes hear noise from below in the youth court.
Other	Rooms were designed to be intimidating and so some guests may feel uncomfortable in some areas, especially the docks. Often very warm. The rooms have very high ceilings.

Note: The Civil Court (top pictures) are not part of the standard ticketed experience for visitors. This is used predominantly for school groups, and sometimes special evening events such as candlelight concerts and Murder Mystery events. This can also be hired for external events and so large groups may use this space.

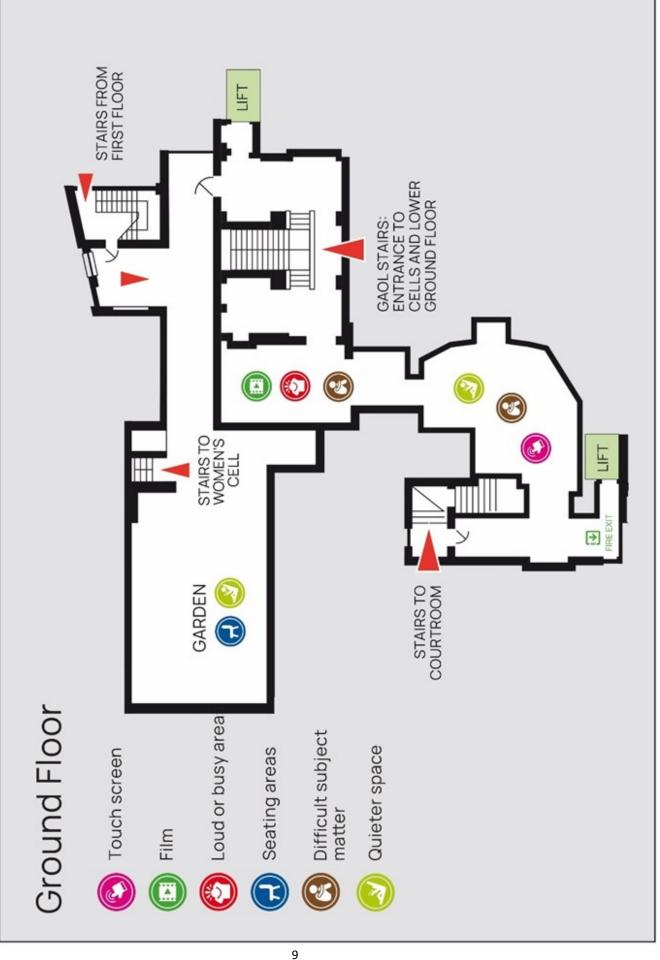
Free and Temporary Exhibit



Lighting	Inconsistent lighting throughout, a little darker in some areas with backlit
	exhibits, so the light can be intense on the eyes when viewing these.
Flooring	Carpeted, consistent, flat and hard, there are a lot of exhibits and benches
	at a lower level here, making the room an unusual shape to navigate.
Noise	Some exhibits make noise in this area but otherwise it is generally a quiet
	area. Next to café so may hear coffee machine.
Other	There are a lot of interactive exhibits here, including audio and visual.
	Most of these are optional although some exhibits make noise continually.

Note: In this area we also have the 'project lab' and 'temporary exhibition' space which often has some small activities and decorations from guests. One of these rooms usually has a quiet area with seating that can be used as a safe space. The exhibits in here are however temporary and often changed and so you can check with reception to see which would be more suited as a safe space if you think it may be required. It is also situated close to a single occupancy disabled toilet.

Ground Floor Map



Georgian Punishments

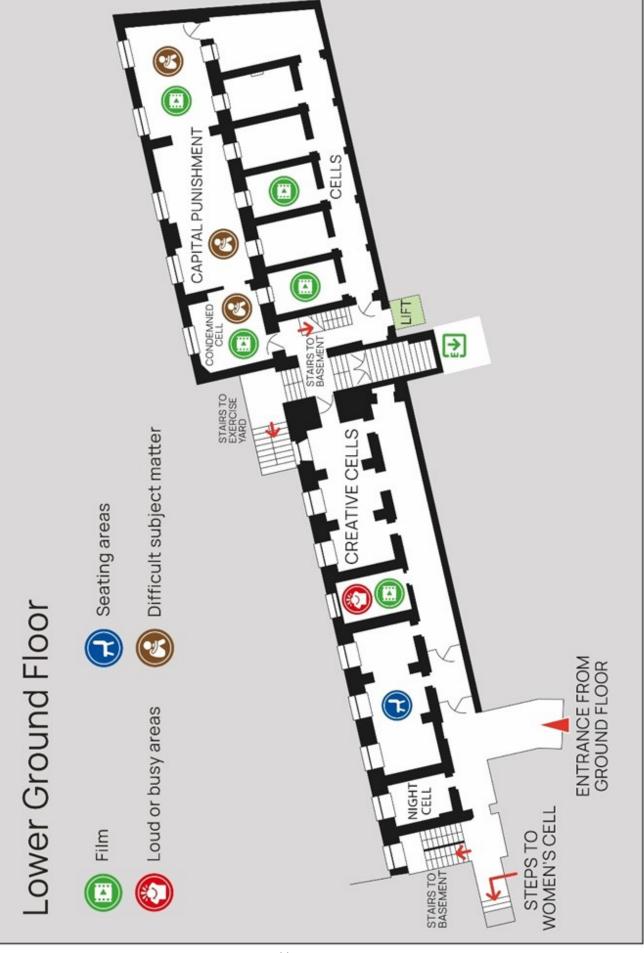




Lighting	Consistent lighting and well let, some back lit information boards that can be a little intense on the eyes if looking at for long periods.
Flooring	Uneven in areas and inconsistent. Some different textures between refurbished areas and flag stone flooring. Hard and cool flooring .
Noise	Very echoey in this area and there is also a video that is playing on a loop, the different voices in the video make it inconsistent volume.
Other	This area contains sensitive content and punishment/torture items that some may find uncomfortable. There is also an interactive touch screen.

Note: There is some seating with arm rests before the stairs in this area and access to a small outdoor courtyard space with seating on the same level should somebody need to quickly exit the space or sit down. This courtyard sometimes smells strongly of food due to the proximity of the Iberico Restaurant.

Lower Ground Floor Map



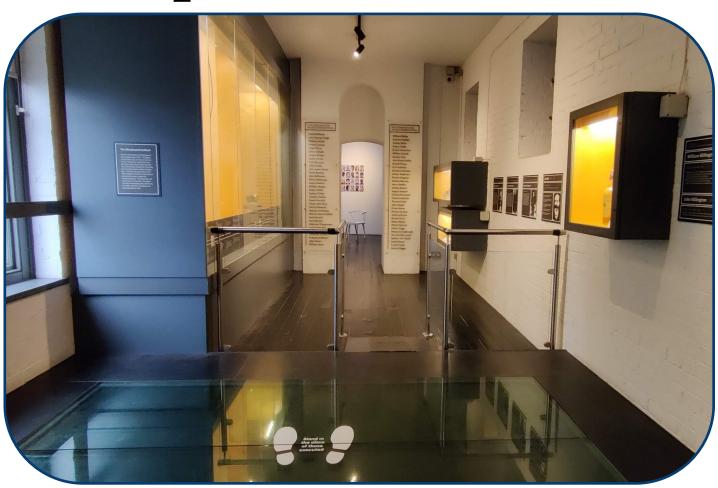
Night cell, creative cells and cells





Lighting	Lighting can be dim and inconsistent, especially in the night cell. Lighting can change seasonally and with weather in cells with windows, often being much darker throughout the winter months.
Flooring	Uneven and inconsistent flooring, very hard and cold stone. Stairs leading to and from this section are worn and lower in the middle.
Noise	Very echoey. There are videos on loop in the creative cells, cells next to capital punishment that can be heard from adjoining sections. There is a 'crank' activity that is quite creaky here and some chains that will make noise if
Other	Some cells are quite small with small doorways. The temperature is very variable, some areas being very cold throughout the year and others very hot.

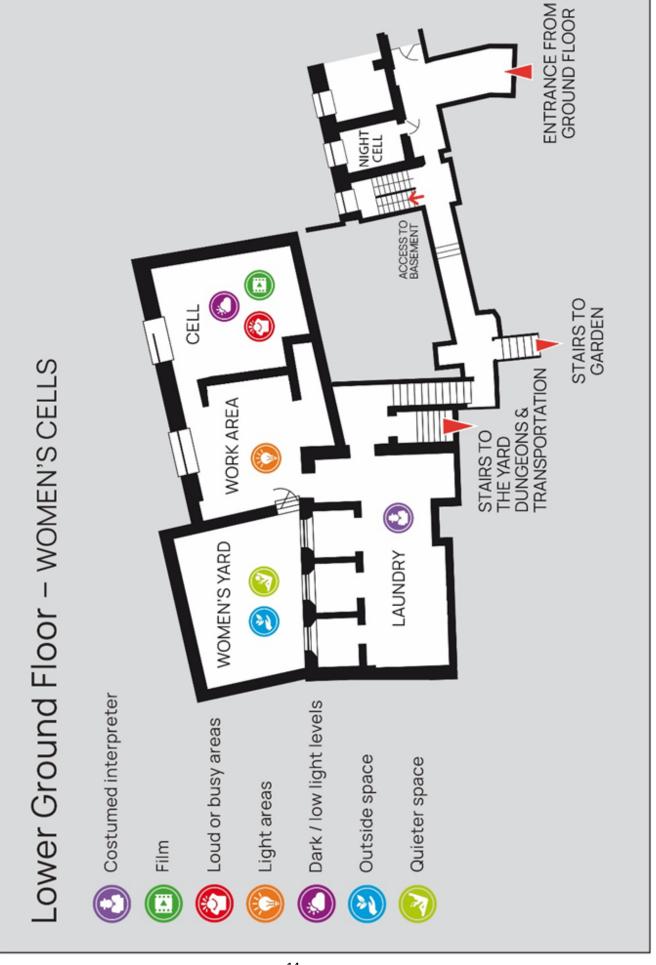
Capital Punishment



Other	Area contains sensitive subject matter including a noose on display that cannot be removed and a gallows trap door that is unavoidable. The gallery is completely avoidable and is clearly marked at entry and exit.
Lighting	Mostly consistent and bright lighting, the cells can be a little darker. Lots of windows and so can change seasonally and depending on weather.
Flooring	Flooring is smooth and hard, with a mixture of stone, wood and glass in this section. There is a small ramp with rubber grip and a small wooden section. Ramps can be difficult to see for people with visual impairment. You must walk across a glass floor section that covers a gallows that is only avoidable if you turn right toward 'cells' rather than into the condemned cell.
Noise	A motion activated audio exhibit plays in the condemned cell which is quite loud and can be heard in the next room. Floor can be creaky.

Note: There is a seating area at the end of this section (as seen ahead in image) with large windows and consistent light. The lift is close to this exhibit, on your right opposite the room labelled 'condemned cell'. This provides quick access to reception at level 1A.

Lower Ground Floor - Women's cells Map



Women's Wing







Lighting	Inconsistent, dependant on season and weather due to large windows. Cell tends to de darker due to projector.
Flooring	Mostly stone and very hard and cold with the cell area being wooden. All quite uneven, especially stairs leading to and from area. The cell has a flat wooden floor that isn't too echoey but clicks with shoes.
Noise	Very echoey area, there is a projector playing a video on loop in the cell which can be heard from all areas. Equipment in here may clatter, the drying rack makes a squeaky noise.
Other	It gets very cold here especially in winter due to the exercise yard door. Costumed interpreter may be in here to interact with guests. More intense changes in lighting, sound and smell in transition from here to other areas of the museum due to proximity to dungeon. Images of people on the wall in the final cubicle, may catch people off guard.

Note: There are two benches in the women's cell where visitors can sit, as well as one single user bench in the laundry and another in the wash room. There is a chair in the final cubical too. Due to the nature of the building, unfortunately this area is not wheelchair accessible.

Women's Yard

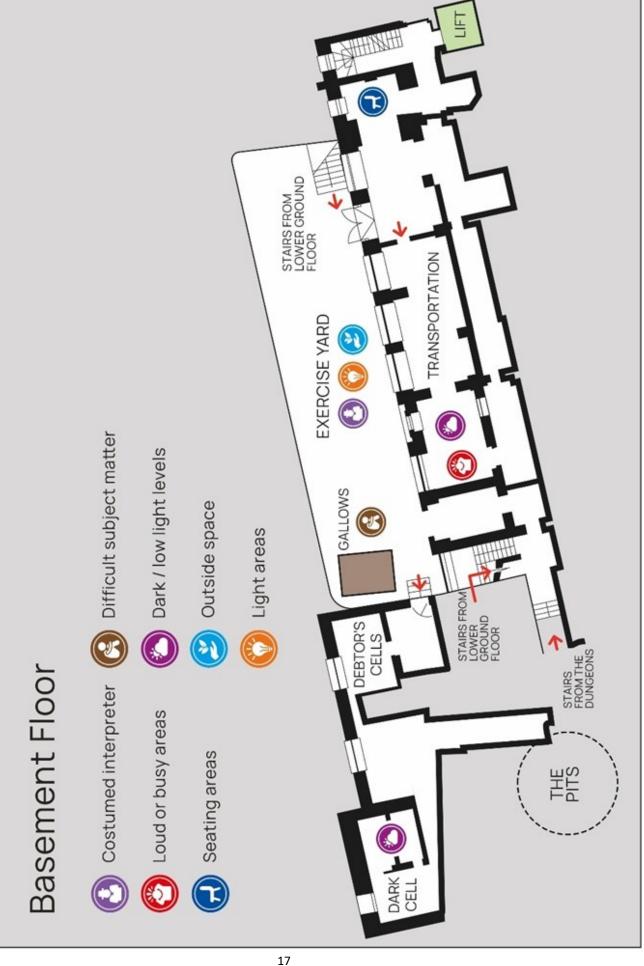




Lighting	Dependant on season and weather as entirely outdoors with no artificial lighting.
Flooring	Uneven. Hard and cold stone and there is a drain groove that runs the length of the yard floor. The step leading out is steep and narrow.
Noise	Generally noisy area as you can hear the city from out here and there is usually traffic and some sort of work going on nearby.
Other	Exposed area with no seating, can be a good place to break away from larger groups as this area is quite small and can become crowded easily.

Note: The woman's yard is built on the edge of a 75ft drop down the road. When escorting groups (schools etc) it is important to tell them this and ensure nobody jumps up the wall. If they want a better view over the wall, we recommend they stand with their back against the building wall opposite the yard wall as you can see the roofs of other building from here, or get them to open their phone camera and take a picture above their heads without dangling this over the edge. Due to the nature of the building, unfortunately this area is not wheelchair accessible.

Basement Floor Map



Exercise yard





Lighting	Largely dependant on season and weather. There are some artificial down lights but lighting on the area is reliant on nature.
Flooring	Very uneven, hard cold stone, floor is in a v shape where it is lower along the middle and higher at the edges which can be difficult for people with impaired depth perception to gauge. Some people perceive this floor as moving due to the dip and uneven surface.
Noise	This area is generally a little quieter than inside but you can hear the city in general here. The wall is high so it is quieter than the woman's yard.
Other	Area contains sensitive content. There is a mock up gallows and hangman's noose at one end of the yard, although this was never used. There are replica grave stones mounted to the wall representing murderers buried on site. Real graffiti on walls from prisoners.

Note: There is a seat kept in the alcove next to the entrance to the debtors cells, and another seating area to the left as you enter the transportation exhibit.

Debtors and Dark Cells







Lighting	Very dim light, that is inconsistent between areas. Dark cells are completely dark inside (but optional). People with visual impairment may struggle to see in shadowy areas.
Flooring	Hard and cold stone flooring, uneven underfoot. There is a slope leading to the dark cells and a step to the pits. Toward the dark cells there is a grate that you can see to the floor below through, you do not need to stand on this to pass it (see below).
Noise	You can hear people from adjoining sections. There is a locked gate leading directly to the dungeons so you can hear people in there. There are chains that make noise if moved.
Other	Very tight corridors and small spaces. Sometimes a costumed interpreter will be here to interact with people. There are two mannequins in this area (pits and dark cell, see below). Irregular shaped rooms.







Note: Due to the nature of the building, unfortunately this area is not wheelchair accessible.

Transportation





Lighting	Very dim and inconsistent throughout. Some extreme dark to light transitions. Furniture makes area very shadowy.
Flooring	Mixture of wooden and stone flooring. Wood is flat and solid but clicks with hard shoes. Stone is uneven. Odd shaped exhibit can make moving around more difficult.
Noise	There is a motion activated audio clip as you enter this exhibit of people singing. The sound of a ship creaking, waves and gulls can be heard in the first section of the ship. You can often hear other people in the same exhibit without being able to see them. At the end of the exhibition there is the sound of insects and a digeridoo playing.
Other	Tight spaces in this area. There are mirrors in some of the darker areas around corners. There are some wooden statues of people in the second section along as you enter. There is a mannequin above you as you turn left at the end of the first stretch of the exhibit. This area can include various smells.

Note: There is a seating area to the left as you enter the transportation exhibit and quick access to an outdoor space. The lift is also situated near here—turn left to the seating area and then right. The lift gives you quick access up to reception at level 1A.

Mannequins in Transportation

There are not many mannequins around our building. There are some people who find these uncomfortable and so ALL mannequins you may encounter are included here.



In Transportation. In this exhibit you walk down one side, do a 'U-turn' and walk the same length back down the next corridor. This mannequin is in the ceiling just after you have done the 'U-turn'.

In transportation, in the second segment of the 'ship' in the first corridor. These are not mannequins, but carved wooden people.



Narrow Marsh





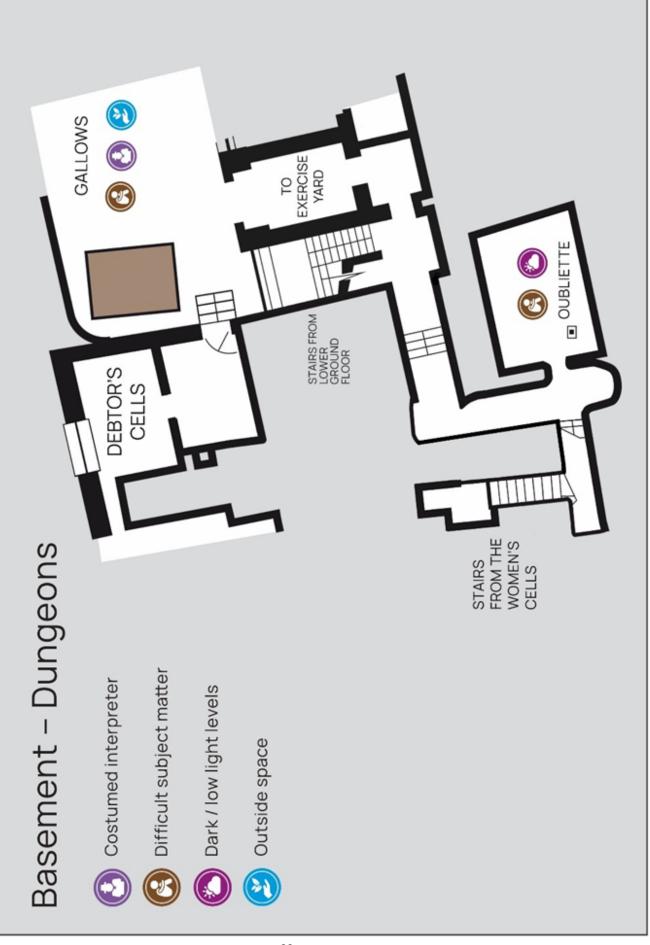




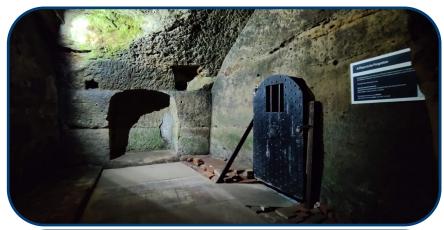
Lighting	Inconsistent lighting, mostly dim throughout. Each room in this area has different lighting so some harsh transitions between areas.
Flooring	Inconsistent between each area. There is a mix of concrete and flagstone which is uneven.
Noise	This is a very echoey area. You can hear some of the audio exhibits from the floor above through grates in the ceiling and other guests as well. There is a bell in this area that is often used during sessions.
Other	Some narrow spaces. There are floor to ceiling mirrors in some rooms. The area is painted to look like a small town, so the proportions can look strange. Some walls are angled down towards you. There is only one entrance/exit to this area. This area can smell damp. It is usually cold in here.

Note: This area is only used during some school visits. In two of the rooms there are places to sit. One room has two benches, and the other some chairs. Although there is only one entrance, the area is not large and outdoors is easily accessible.

Basement - Dungeons Map



Dungeons







Lighting	Dim lighting. The staircase down has lighting on the floor but is quite dark. The main room in the Dungeon is well lit. There are some extreme transitions between dark and light areas. The dark and shadows can look almost pitch
Flooring	Stairs carved out of sand stone which are very worn and uneven. Not all steps are the same size and shape. Some brick flooring in main room, with some loose areas. Wooden flooring in main room is even but sounds hollow although it is not, just slightly raised.
Noise	Stairway is echoey due to proximity to other areas. There is a gate between the dungeon and Debtors cells where you can hear other guests and the costumed interpreters. Noise may sound more damp/flat here.
Other	Some tight spaces and low ceilings. You will not have to crawl or squeeze, just duck. Usually very cold. There is some moss growing on the ceiling (safe). There is a locked gate you can see through but cannot access. Nothing will jump out at you from this gate or in this section. It can smell damp. There are two exits in this section, the lower exit is very close to an outdoor area.

Note: Due to the nature of the building, unfortunately this area is not wheelchair accessible.

Lunch Rooms







Lighting	All well lit. Downstairs lunchrooms have blocked windows so these will be dark when you open the door before lights are switched on.
Flooring	Dark carpets in the main hallway. Room one and four have a light purple vinyl floor with a slightly raised curb on the fire place on the far side. Room two has an original wooden floor that is solid and flat with a few loose chunks. Room three has a more spongey light coloured tile floor.
Noise	Rooms can be loud as they are quite small and often have many people. The hallway is echoey but often a little quieter. In the downstairs rooms you can sometimes hear people passing by through the fire escape.
Other	Downstairs rooms do not have windows to the outside but upstairs do. Downstairs rooms are wheelchair accessible via the adjoining police station but upstairs rooms are not. The hallway is very bright and colourful, with quotes painted onto the walls and stained glass windows. There are 23 steps.

Note: These rooms are only used for visiting school groups.

Transformers Room



Lighting	Natural lighting from large windows. Spotlighting creates bright but uneven lighting. The spotlights can reflect of the whiteboard.
Flooring	Dark, uneven and inconsistent flooring, very hard and cold stone.
Noise	Radiator can sometimes bang or tick. There is a ticking clock. Sound of people in the corridor and using the tenants entrance can also sometimes be heard.
Other	It can get very warm in the summer. This space is wheelchair accessible.

Note: This room is used for Make It Yours sessions on a Friday. It is also used by school groups.

Costumed Interpreters

Throughout your visit you may encounter some costumed interpreters. They will be dressed in period appropriate clothing and interact with guests as their character. It is likely they will answer questions and respond to visitors and other staff in character. They can be found during set performance times or *ad hoc* in particular places around the museums.



JUDGE AND BARRISTER

Location: Criminal Court (First Floor)

Performances: The barrister is available throughout the day in the court to interact with. The Judge is only present during the courtroom performance.

Description: Barrister is calm and friendly to speak with. The Judge can be louder and more intimidating, there may be some shouting during performance times only. Visitor interaction is encouraged during performances. Schools will not attend these trials.



VICTORIAN MATRON

Location: Women's Cells (Lower Ground Floor)

Performances: No performances, available throughout the day **Description:** Matron was responsible for caring for women in the gaol in the 1800's. She will be dress in a floor length black dress, sometimes with cloak and have a black head covering and carry a cane. Matron is likely to be firm and strict but polite and fair. Matron rarely shouts but may raise her voice during school performances.



GEORGIAN GAOLER

Location: Debtors Cells (Basement Floor)

Performances: Execution performance and available throughout the day **Description:** Gaoler was responsible for the inmates during the 1700's. Gaoler will be wearing white and brown clothing, sometimes a cloak and a hat and will carry a whip. He is likely to be rude and sarcastic and will shout, especially during public and school performances.



OTHER

Occasionally there will be additional characters around the gaol. These will usually be a prisoner accompanying one of the above characters or an assistant to a character but may vary. You can ask at reception about the daily staffing if required. Some performances will also include additional characters—a prisoner is included in the execution performance and sometimes a witness in the public trial performance.

Costumed Performances

At set times during the day there are public performances that are included as part of the museum entrance ticket. The performances available and the times of the performances are different during term time and at weekends. You will be told the times of the performances for the day of your visit when you arrive by reception.

Courtroom Trial



Location: Criminal Court (First Floor)

Performance details: This is a sit down
performance led by our costumed interpreter
playing the Barrister. There will also be the
Judge present. During peak times a costumed
interpreter plays a member of the public who
shouts out during the performance.

Visitor interaction is encouraged during
performances with members of the audience
being called on to play the roles of the
defendant/s and witnesses. If you do not want
to be part of the performance just let the
Barrister know as you sit down. There is
limited visibility for wheelchair users in the
courtroom



Hangings

Location: Exercise Yard (Basement Floor)
Performance details: Execution performances are run by the costume interpreter playing the Georgian Gaoler. Another costume interpreter plays the role of the criminal about to be hanged. The performance takes place in front of the gallows in our outside exercise yard. The audience stands during the performance and are encouraged to join in with cheering and booing. Schools groups will not attend the hangings.

Mannequins

There are not many mannequins around our building. There are some people who find these uncomfortable and so ALL mannequins you may encounter are included here.



In the Debtor cell area. As you enter the room with chains on the wall in front of you, to the left there is a step and a view into 'the pits'.



In the dark cell area. As you go down the tight corridor that gets more narrow, this mannequin is located in the first room directly to your right.



In Transportation. In this exhibit you walk down one side, do a 'U-turn' and walk the same length back down the next corridor. This mannequin is in the ceiling just after you have done the 'U-turn'.



In transportation, in the second segment of the 'ship' in the first corridor. These are not mannequins, but carved wooden people.

Stairs in the building

Our building has many stairways and all are different. Some are modern and some are original. Whilst every care has been taken to install handrails and safety measures, some stairs are uneven or different shapes and sizes. Below are some images of the stairs you can expect to encounter as you move around the building.



Steps up to the museum from the outside.

(9 steps, step depth varies).



From free exhibit space to the museum courtyard.
(15 steps)



From Georgian punishment on ground floor to night cell on lower ground floor. (15 steps, with corner and centre divider)





From
reception
to youth
court (10
steps, only
schools
will use
this route)



From courtyard to night cell (15 steps total, with a break after 9 steps down)



From Women's cells to lower ground floor (14 steps. Additional 9 steps up to courtyard, or 6 steps down to lower ground floor immediately after).

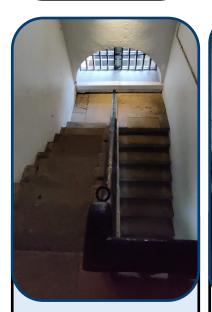


From Exercise Yard to
Dungeons
(6 steps, may need to
bend under entrance
on bottom step)

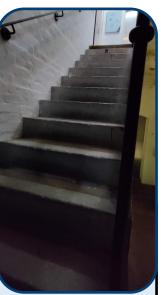


To Dungeons from Women's Cells

(14 steps. These stairs go around a corner and are uneven. There is an additional step that leads into the Oubliette).



From night cell to exercise yard (18 Steps, steps are worn).



From transportation to capital punishment (18 Steps)



From capital punishment to exercise yard (18 steps total with a break after 9 steps up)



Down into the Debtors and Dark Cells (4 Steps)

Lifts in the Building

To enter the building using a lift, a member of staff must be notified as the lift is behind a coded door for security purposes. They will escort you to our ground level courtyard (level 0) and help you into the lift which will take you to the first floor, where you can access the lifts below.



Enter at 1A on the FIRST FLOOR (1A). Pressing 0 will take you to street level. You can exit the building through the coded door but cannot get back in.

Pressing **–1** will take you to the LOWER GROUND FLOOR. When you exit, the entrance to the capital punishment gallery will be ahead of you.



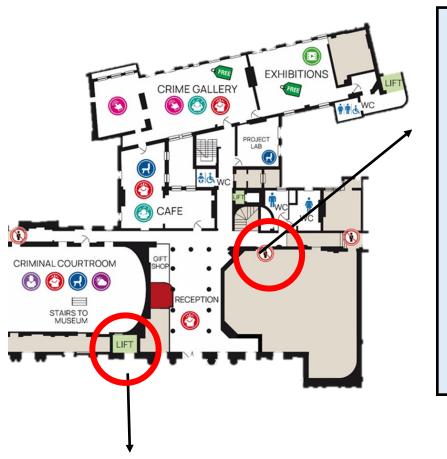
Pressing -2 will take you to the BASEMENT FLOOR. When you exit transportation is to your left.



Unfortunately due to the nature of our building, the women's cells, dungeon and debtors cells are inaccessible by lift. Please see the stairs sections for more information on how these areas can be accessed.

Lifts in the Building

To enter the building using a lift, a member of staff must be notified as the lift is behind a coded door for security purposes. They will escort you to our ground level courtyard (level 0) and help you into the lift which will take you to the first floor, where you can access the lifts below.



Enter opposite the accessible toilet at level 1. Pressing level 0 will take you to the GROUND FLOOR. When you exit, the courtyard is to your right and Georgian punishment is ahead.



You will need a key and a member of staff to go down in the lift. You can come up in the lift without a key

Enter behind a door in the criminal court at level 1. Pressing level 0 takes you to the GROUND FLOOR. You will exit in the Georgian punishment area.

This lift is of a non-standard size with a narrower entrance. If you are unable to access this lift please speak to reception who will help you use the lift opposite the assessable toilets.



Unfortunately due to the nature of our building, the women's cells, dungeon and debtors cells are inaccessible by lift. Please see the stairs sections for more information on how these areas can be accessed.

Safe Spaces

Each individual is different and may require a different kind of 'safe space'. Here are some areas that we recommend with a short description of the area and it's location. If you require an alternative safe space, please speak with a member of staff.



Reception Bench

Location: First Floor, to the right of the Café opposite the truncheon display.

Description: A long bench to sit on. You can hear a lot of other exhibits and areas from here, but it is an accessible seating area close to the entry next to an open space.



Courtyard

Location: Ground floor. Can be accessed via the stairs next to the free exhibit, or from Georgian punishments (walk past the stairs to county gaol and out the door)

Description: A small outdoor space with tables and chairs. The area is usually quite quiet. Sometimes you can smell food as it is next to a restaurant we share our building with.



Seating Area

Location: Ground floor. Exit the Georgian punishment area and this is located before the stairs to county Gaol Description: A small indoor area with chairs and a table. This is well lit but can be echoey and you can hear audio from adjoining exhibits.



County Gaol Bench

Location: Lower Ground Floor. Opposite the night cell and just after the stairs into county Gaol

Description: An accessible seating area in a large neutral open space. It is echoey here and there are no windows.



Hard Labour Cell

Location: Lower Ground Floor. By Night Cell. Description: A sturdy bed that can be sat on in a large room opposite a window overlooking the wall outside. Whilst this may be a loud area for some, you can control who accesses this area if a private space is needed.



Transportation

Location: Basement Floor. Next to the Transportation exhibit.

Description: A small seating area with a table.
This corner can be loud but is fairly private and next to a lift that gives easy access back to the first floor (reception)



Project Lab and Exhibitions

Location: First Floor

Description: These rooms hold temporary exhibits. One of these spaces is usually a quiet space with seating. Please check with staff as to current exhibits if this space may be needed as they change regularly and can contain sensitive content,

Additional Information

FIRE ALARM

The fire alarm in this building is a loud voice that states an incident has occurred which requires you to leave the building. This is accompanied in some areas by a siren noise. Sometimes this is a constant tone. There are many doors in the museum that will automatically close when this is triggered. This system is tested every Wednesday morning at 9.30am. If the alarm rings ag any other time, you should leave the building and gather at St. Mary's church (uphill to the right when you leave).

BUSY TIMES

The museum is open to the public on most days but can also accommodate multiple school visits and external bookings within a day. When large school groups are in, the museum spaces can get busy, but schools don't spend much more than 30 minutes in one area at a time, and so it is possible to see another area of the museum and go back once it is quieter. Usually, school arrival is around 10.00 and departure at 2.30pm, and so it is expected that the reception area and toilets will be busier between 10-00am and 10.30am and 2.15pm and 2.45pm. When external bookings are made the first floor can be busier as hired rooms are located near here.

PERFORMANCES

During performances, visitor participation in encouraged and members of the audience may be called upon. If someone is uncomfortable with this participation, we recommend arriving slightly earlier to speak with the character so they know not to pick on you, or place yourselves further back in the performance areas to avoid being chosen. Performances tend to be busier events and there is usually a small influx of people around the area where the performance took place immediately after.

HEIGHTS

In some areas, a phobia of heights may be triggered. Within our courtrooms some seating areas are higher with narrow stair ways (balconies are not included in normal ticketed access, but may be used during special evening events). Many stair ways a quite high, steep and narrow. The building is build on the edge of a cliff and in some areas this is more apparent. In the women's exercise yard you can see the tops of buildings and in the hard labour cells on the lower ground floor there is a window where you can see out above the wall in the main exercise yard.