

¹Stanley Spencer Gallery Access Guide and exhibition information

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Pre-Arrival

Exhibition Guides

To assist you in deciding whether to visit the current exhibition and also support you during your visit, you can download an accessible version of the Labels, Wall Text and Commentary and an accessible version of Visual Descriptions of a selection of the Exhibits from our website. You may also bring copies of these documents with you on your tablet, phone or laptop to the Gallery. If you use audio in the Gallery, we prefer visitors to also use headphones. A Large Print copy of the Labels is available in the Gallery.

Facilities

1. Toilet facilities for visitors.

Unfortunately, we are not able to provide toilet facilities (other than for visitors with bladder cancer), refreshments or mobility aids.

The public toilets are located around the corner in a small car park. The toilets include disabled facilities, and the Gallery holds a RADAR key. Visitors who have cancer and may urgently need to use a bathroom can gain access to the volunteer toilet in the Gallery on production of the Macmillan or Bowel Cancer card.

2. Refreshment facilities.

We do not have refreshment facilities but there are a range of options in the village High Street.

3. Wheelchairs or other mobility aids.

We do not have mobility aids but the Gallery is not a large building. For visitors who wish to bring their own mobility aid, the entrance doors are 103cm wide, the lift is 79cm wide and the fire door is 93cm wide. Visitors using the lift must be able to use the stairs to exit the Gallery in the event of a power failure or fire.

Getting to the Gallery

Public Transport

The train service is operated by First Great Western with the principal station being Maidenhead. The Gallery is approximately one mile from Cookham Station, which is on a branch line between Maidenhead to and from Marlow.

There are taxis available at Maidenhead Station and some vehicles are designed for disabled passengers. Taxies from Cookham Station can be booked on 01628 777400

There are several taxis licensed by the Local Authority specifically for wheelchair users and other disabled passengers from the taxi ranks in Windsor and Maidenhead. To book, please call:

Windsor: 01753 862020

Maidenhead: 01628 634311

A bus service (Bus 37 towards High Wycombe Bus Station) runs from Bridge Avenue, Maidenhead to Cookham. The bus stops at the Memorial in Cookham which is approximately 400 yards west of the Gallery.

The route to the Gallery from public transport is generally flat and tarmac / paved but the pavement is very narrow adjacent to some terrace houses about ½ mile from the station and wheelchair users would probably have to use the road.

Car Parking and arriving on foot or bicycle.

Car parking including Blue Badge parking is available in a small public car park close to the Gallery on Sutton Road (A4094) and on-street parking on the High Street is also available for two hours. Our postcode is SL69SJ.

The on-street parking is on the north side of the High Street and the Gallery is on the south side. There are designated spaces for Blue Badge holders.

Although there is a traffic island in the middle of the road in front of the Gallery, the most accessible place to cross the High Street is opposite the Kings Arms public house located in the middle of the High Street because the kerb is lowered at that point. Kerbs in the village are normally higher than normal.

There is also a large National Trust car park on Cookham Moor to the west of the village High Street. Unless you are a National Trust member, there is a charge. The car park is uneven grassland and may be muddy during wet weather.

Car parking in the village and its car park is free, but traffic wardens do patrol. Visitors are advised to check the time limits when parking.

The approach to the Gallery from the small car park and on street parking is flat, even, and generally tarmac.

Group visits

If you would like to discuss arranging a visit for a group of people with disabilities, please email dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk and one of our volunteers will contact you.

A volunteer from the Gallery will accompany Group visits whenever possible to support the organiser, and if requested, provide a guided tour of the Exhibition.

Main Entrance and arrival

The Gallery is the white building at the eastern end of the High Street. It is a former church and consequently it is a distinctive building. The Gallery entrance is flat with no stairs and is located on the High Street side of the building. There are large buttons at the left-hand side of the door frame to open the inner doors and the outer door to leave the building. The doors are 103 cm wide and wheel-chair accessible.

The entrance and Gallery are well-lit with ceiling lighting. The floor surface is wood and there are no rugs or carpets. Benches are available for seating.

Entrance to the Gallery

Please ring the bell to the left of the door to alert the Custodian if the door does not open outwards automatically and you need assistance entering the Gallery.

Contactless cards are accepted for all payments and are currently the preferred means of payment.

Welcome desk

- **The main entrance is staffed by the Custodian.**
- **A hearing loop is installed at the entrance.**

- **The admissions desk is low and therefore accessible to wheelchair users.**
- **We are a Gallery run by volunteers. There is normally only one volunteer, known as the Custodian, on duty when the Gallery is open.**
- **On request the Custodian can provide**
 - **a large print copy Labels and Text on the Gallery walls**
 - **the RADAR key for the nearby toilets,**
 - **a water bowl for assistance dogs**
 - **A set of colouring sheets with drawings of two paintings**
 - **sensory calming aids**
 - **a children's activity leaflet if available**
 - **coloured overlays**
 - **magnifying glass**
 - **assistance with lift and doors**
 - **information about the Exhibition**
 - **Information about Cookham**

If you would like additional support than the Custodian can provide, please contact us before your visit on 01628 531 092 and leave a message for Dennis or [email dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk](mailto:dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk). One of our volunteers will contact you to see if we can make arrangements for an escorted visit.

Exhibition space

The building is a converted church with a vaulted ceiling. The exhibition is located on the ground floor, on a wall adjacent to the staircase and on a mezzanine floor.

The Gallery is uniformly well lit with ceiling lighting. There are no dark areas. The floor is wooden. There are no rugs. There are solid benches to sit on.

The stairs have ribbed edges and a handrail.

A lift is available for taking visitors to the mezzanine floor on which exhibits, the video screen and archives are located.

However, visitors should be aware that the lift cannot be used if there is a fire or power cut.

Visitors who use the lift to access the mezzanine floor must be able to evacuate the building using the stairs in an emergency.

Exhibits

The Gallery presents approximately 50 paintings and drawings by Spencer and, occasionally, other artists.

Artefacts are displayed in cabinets with glass sides and which can be viewed by wheelchair users.

There are extensive archives which are primarily printed documents.

For some exhibitions, an audio-visual presentation is available. Unfortunately, this is currently not captioned.

Several paintings /drawings are hung on the wall adjacent to the stairs and, although visible from both floors, cannot be examined closely by visitors who are unable to use stairs without assistance.

Public Toilets

Public toilets are in the adjacent public car park. The Gallery holds a RADAR key which is available from the Custodian.

Additional assistance available.

We hope that the information in this Guide enables you to plan your visit. Below we have added additional information which may be relevant to visitors with specific requirements.

Visitors who are dyslexic.

You are invited to download a [Photographic Guide of the Gallery](#) containing photographs of the Gallery and the Gallery experience

We provide coloured overlays and rulers for visitors who are dyslexic.

If you wish to colour in a drawing from a painting, please ask the Custodian. If you wish to copy a painting, please bring your

sketch pad and pencils. For safety reasons you can not use paint or charcoal in the Gallery.

Blind or visually impaired visitors

We also have a Large Print copy of the Labels available in the Gallery.

Please contact dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk and we will try to arrange an audio-described tour for a group of visitors.

Visitors who have cancer

Visitors who have cancer and may urgently need to use a bathroom can gain access to the custodian's toilet in the Gallery on production of the Macmillan or Bowel Cancer card.

Neurodivergent visitors, visitors with ADHD or on the autism spectrum

You may wish to read our [Photographic Guide to the Gallery](#) so that you can see how we operate the Gallery.

If you wish to colour in a drawing from a painting, please ask the Custodian. If you wish to copy a painting, please bring your sketch pad and pencils. For safety reasons you cannot use paint or charcoal in the Gallery.

There may be other visitors in the Gallery. If you would prefer a quieter environment, we are happy to try to open the Gallery for you before the Gallery is open to the general public. Please email dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk to see if we can make arrangements.

Visitors with mobility impairments

Unfortunately, it is not practical to access the Mezzanine floor, audio visual guide or Archives unless you can evacuate the Gallery in an emergency using the stairs. If you wish to access the Archives and can't use the stairs, please email dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk or telephone 01628 531 092 and leave a message for Dennis and we will make alternative arrangements to bring the relevant Archive material downstairs for you.

Unfortunately, visitors who cannot use the stairs will not be able to see in detail the items displayed adjacent to the stairs.

If you have difficulty reading the labels or wall text because of its location, please ask the Custodian for a printed copy.

Shop

The shop is located at the entrance.

The shop sells, books, framed and unframed prints, postcards etc. Sample books are available for browsing. However, if a book you wish to look at has been shelved so it is inaccessible to you, please ask the Custodian and they will assist you.

A hearing loop is in place.

Feedback

We welcome feedback on the information available to you from our website and your visit to the Gallery

dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk

Contact Information

If you have specific questions or wish to discuss your proposed visit please contact our Access Volunteer by either email dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk or telephone 01628 471885 and leave a message for Dennis

Email: **dennis@stanleypencer.org.uk**

Address **High Street Cookham**

Berkshire

SL6 9SJ

Telephone: 01628 471885

Appendix: Photographic Guide of the Gallery


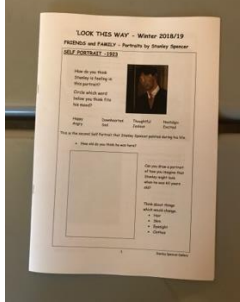
The Gallery has paintings painted by one of Britain's leading artists – Sir Stanley Spencer.

You can visit the Gallery when it is open to the public. Normal admission charges apply. Parent's, guardian's or carer's are admitted free when accompanying a paying visitor who has an impairment.

You can also visit the Gallery on one of the sessions specifically organised for groups of people from the local community. To book a session for a Group please contact the Gallery at access@stanleypencer.org.uk . These sessions are sometimes arranged when the Gallery is closed to the general public to provide a very quiet environment. There is no charge for Community Groups requiring accessible arrangements when visiting the Gallery.

When in the Gallery you can do a number of things

Activities

<p>Look and talk about Stanley's paintings.</p>	
<p>For some Exhibitions there may be Visual Descriptions to download or copy to a tablet in the Gallery in which volunteers have written a visual description of some of the Exhibits which may help visitors with visual impairment or dyslexia.</p>	
<p>You can answer the questions about the paintings in the</p>	

Exhibition on a worksheet available in the Gallery.	
You can use your own artistic skills to do a sketch in pencil which is inspired by one of his paintings. Stanley would copy illustrations from books and paintings in exhibitions when he was learning to draw! Please use pencil for your sketches to minimise any risk to our paintings.	

<p>Colour a printed copy of a painting.</p> <p>You can use similar colours to Stanley or choose whichever colours you would like to represent how you feel.</p> <p>This can be a very relaxing activity.</p>	
<p>Write a comment in the Visitors Book.</p>	

<p>Our Management Committee reads all comments to see how we can improve the visit for future visitors.</p>	
<p>Buy a catalogue describing the exhibition, a postcard showing a painting or a print of a painting.</p> <p>Please ask the custodian if you would like to know the price of any product.</p>	

<p>There is a programme on the TV on the second floor which lets you see and hear Stanley and other</p>	
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<p>people discussing his life and work.</p> <p>There are also books and other documents in these cabinets which you can read when you are at the Gallery.</p>	
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However, there are three things you should not do in the Gallery.

The first is that you must not touch any of the paintings with your hand or a pencil or anything else because that would damage the painting.

For the same reason we do not eat anything in the Gallery and only drink still water. This minimises the risk of damage to the paintings.

Finally, unfortunately you cannot take photographs with a camera or your phone in the Gallery. This is because we do not

own all of the paintings and some owners have stated they do not wish their paintings to be photographed.


Going to the Gallery and what you will see when you go into the Gallery.

The Gallery is in a village called Cookham. Stanley was born in the village in 1891 and lived here most of his life. If you have any questions about Stanley and his life, please ask the custodian who is in the Gallery.

If you come to Cookham by car from the south from the A4 or Maidenhead, you can park either on the road or in the car park next to the gallery.



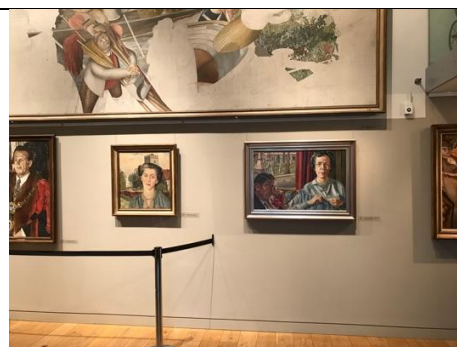
<p>There are public conveniences in this car park. There are no public conveniences in the Gallery.</p>	
<p>If you come by car through the village you can park on the High Street or the road opposite.</p> <p>If you come by bus or train you will walk along the High Street to</p>	

<p>the Gallery at the far end of the road.</p> <p>The Gallery is the white building at the end of the road.</p>	
<p>This is the entrance door. You will see that the door is at the side of the porch and not at the front.</p> <p>If you are visiting the Gallery for a Group session you may see that the sign inside the porch says 'closed'. This is because the Gallery is closed to the public but open to you on these special occasions.</p>	

To go into the Gallery please open this door and an inner door on your left hand side as you go into the porch.

If you visit when the Gallery is open to the public, the signs say 'Open' and are outside of the Gallery. On these visits the outer door will automatically open outwards as you approach it.

As you go through the porch this is what you will see paintings on the wall opposite the entrance.



The paintings may be different to those shown in these photographs because we change the Exhibition twice a year – in November and April

As you go through the second door, to your left you will see one of our volunteers sitting behind the desk. This volunteer is known as ‘the custodian’. This probably will not be the person in this photograph.

They will welcome you to the Gallery and will try to answer any questions you may have and give



you aids to help you as you go round the Exhibition.

They can also let you have drawings to colour or a quiz should you decide you wish to use them.

The exhibition starts here on the north wall which is the wall on your right hand side as you come into the Gallery

The exhibition continues in an anti-clockwise direction to your left as you view the paintings.

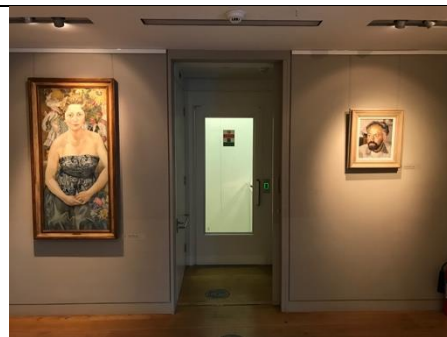


As you go around the Gallery this is the next wall. It will have some other paintings for you to look at.



The door slides open and gives access to the lift and other rooms used by the volunteers to store publications and copies of prints.

This photograph shows the door open and the lift door.



This is the view down the Gallery towards the wall opposite the entrance to the lift.



The door in this wall is an emergency exit.

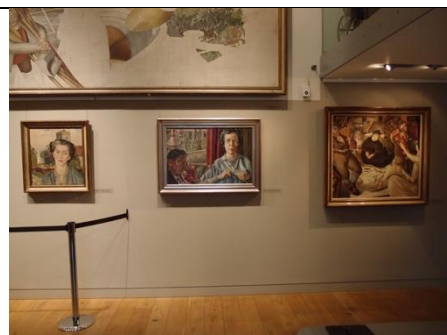
In the unlikely event of a fire in the building you will hear the very loud fire alarm!

You should then leave the building either through this door or the door you used to come into the Gallery.

Most paintings in the Gallery are covered with a glass sheet to prevent the painting being accidentally damaged.

However, if any paints are not covered with glass we have to be careful that visitors do not get too close to these paintings in case they accidentally damage them.

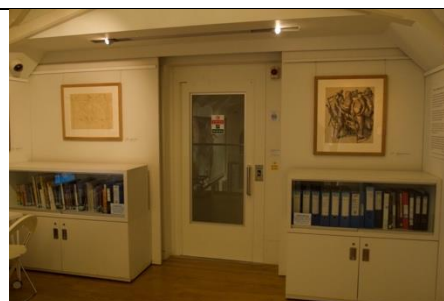
Therefore, if you see any yellow lines on the floor, or wires or belts attached to posts, can you please not stand on the floor within the lines or between the





wire and the paintings. Thank you

The stairs take you up to the second floor. There are paintings on the wall for you to look at as you go upstairs but, because they are close to you, you need to take care that you do not accidentally touch them.

This is shows the lift entrance on the second floor



<p>The cabinets on either side of the lift door contain books and other documents you can read when you are in the Gallery.</p>	
<p>There is a programme on the TV which lets you see and hear Stanley and other people discussing his life and work.</p> <p>You need to use headphones to hear the sound.</p> <p>The pram used to be used by Stanley to take his easel and paints around the village. It is</p>	

<p>very old and therefore delicate, and we ask visitors not to touch it in case it gets damaged.</p>	
<p>This is the view from the second floor back towards the east wall.</p> <p>You have seen all of the paintings and drawings in this Exhibition.</p>	


EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

In the event that the alarm bell rings you must follow the Custodian's instructions and leave the gallery. If you are on the second floor, please do NOT use the lift to go downstairs but please use the stairs.

There are two exits from the building in an emergency.

You can leave through this door which will open automatically in the event of an emergency.



<p>If you use this door turn right outside the door and wait in the car park next to the garage which is in front of you.</p>	
<p>You can also leave the building through the doors you came in.</p> <p>You should turn then turn right at the end of the building and go and wait in the car park until you are told what to do next.</p>	

Your Notes and Questions

If you would like further information, please email us at

access@stanleypencer.org.uk

Access Guide April 2023

