

Paths @ Nevill Hall

Nevill Hall Nature Spaces

Jan 2026



Overview

The paths within and around the site provide the crucial conduit for people to access the Nature Spaces. Due to the natural constraints and limitations of the site not all parts will be equally accessible for all visitors. Hence, careful thought and planning is required to enhance access, especially for those with limited mobility and wheelchair users.

Background

Access is the key to engagement - walking and talking, seeing a sharing, coming and going - and good paths the basis of easy travel!

The paths of Nevill Hall and gardens connect us, inside and outside the Hospital. Clear passage with comforting decoration and signage help our way.



Inside the hospital it has been recognised using the surrounds as places for art, long supported by GARTH (Gwent Arts in Health).

Outside they take us to our transport, and sometimes a quick route to clinics, decorated in times gone by regular planting, unfortunately no longer provided with the limited garden budget.

Paths can also take us on to the wonderful supportive environment we share with Nature, and as a unique opportunity for all users of the hospital, into the spaces that have been developed in the formal gardens that existed for the old Nevill Hall and beyond .



Those gardens, orchard and woodland are there to be used but sadly many people do not actually know of their existence.

Access in many places is unsigned and in places difficult, certainly not all at disability standard.

New routes are needed. The path routes around the hospital site are illustrated in the attached map.



The routes into the hospital site for all modes of transport are at the car entrances at the A40 and Union Road. There are no other specific walking or cycling access routes.

Generally, the standard of walking paths is adequate in areas close to the hospital, but routes into the gardens need improvement - again.

This was partially done in the Millennium Garden Project (1998-2001). New paths of a good standard for walking were laid around the Pond and into the Woodland. Unfortunately, for lack of resources at that time, the circuit route around the woodland and pond was not completed.



At the Sensory Garden a red coloured tarmacked path was laid, red being the best colour most easily seen by partially sighted people. This is now in a poor condition the surface roughened by underground tree routes, and one section, with recent building works, resurfaced in black.



Opportunities

We all recognise the gardens are a unique therapeutic treasure to be shared by all, and their secrecy must be revealed! Good paths and signage for good access by all must be provided.

This requires both improvements and better maintenance of existing paths, and more information provided in signs and advertising.

The potential opportunity also exists in creating new routes for walking and cycling into the hospital.



Future Plans

1. Restore container and pot planting

This would be good to do around the paths close to the hospital, and a good task for NHNS volunteers and/or as part of a therapeutic gardening project.

2. Sensory Gardens paths

Around the existing Sensory Garden, levelling of the paths is needed, including resurfacing to remove root damaged surfaces. Long term maintenance is required to keep the path clear of the in-avoidable debris over the changing seasons.

3. Woodland paths

- a) The existing footpaths need improving with borders cleared to allow existing daffodil growth; with some replanting.
- b) The paths connecting the pond – woodland – orchard, needs to be re-designed to improve access, as much as is feasible on the existing terrain. This more detailed planning, will be part of the proposed landscape design work linking the whole site.

- c) Existing entry points need revision, particularly for disabled visitors. The access on the eastern side of the Hall is via steep, narrow steps. On the western side the path goes down a gentle slope. But a dropped kerb is required to replace the standard kerb that has recently been put in for the new car park.
- d) In the longer term if/when the currently unusable Social Club is rebuilt, a new purpose-built access design should be incorporated.

4. Meadow path

A meandering path across the field as proposed in Meadow@ Nevill Hall can initially be created by first mowing a route and providing improved gate access; a desire line path is already visible. In time, consideration could be given to upgrading that route to wheelchair standard.

5. New walking and bicycling access to the hospital.

This can be created by linking the southern limit of the Woodland via a new route along the border of the agricultural field beside the Gas Works/Homemakers site and then linking with the Brecon Road. This is a much longer-term project that needs future consideration. But potentially links with Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) Active Travel strategy and the new Llanfoist pedestrian bridge plans.

6. Signage

This is a general requirement around the hospital site and already exists for information about clinical and utility services. Providing more signs for routes into and around the gardens would be a simple addition.

It would be good to match the design and standard of all signs.

Information boards could be provided to give history and nature information, maybe linking to online resources by QR codes

7. Information

Information leaflets and advertising could be provided on notice boards and other public displays as well as to individuals – staff, patients and visitors

- a) Nature: about the gardens – where they are, what to see, how they came to be.
- b) Green health: about the benefits of Nature to our health and outdoor activities, as well as our human responsibilities to Nature.

Initial Work and Longer Term Maintenance

1. **Pot Planting** Can be undertaken by NHNS volunteers and as part of therapeutic gardening projects.
2. **Path cleaning** This is part of a standard maintenance requirement in existing NHH grounds contracts. An extension may be required to include the Woodland but NHNS could support with some of this.
3. **Signage and Information.** Design and planning for this will be part of the planned Landscape architecture in conjunction with ABUHB.