

BLISTS HILL MUSEUM

SENSORY GUIDE

IRONBRIDGE
Valley of Invention

SENSORY GUIDE

Step back in time to the dawn of the modern age. Experience what everyday life was like in 1900. See how technological advances and industry were changing people's lives.

Visit Victorian shops and cottages, meet craftspeople demonstrating their trades and taste the authentic food in our recreated working town.

Blists Hill is set over 50 acres; whilst this guide suggests a route, visitors are free to explore the site in any way they wish.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

1. VISITOR CENTRE



2. BANK
3. CYCLE SHOWROOM
4. GROCERS
5. CHEMIST
6. GOODS SHED
7. IRON MERCHANTS
8. GENERAL DRAPERS & OUTFITTERS
9. POST OFFICE & MUSEUM OF THE
10. PHOTOGRAPHY
11. SWEET SHOP
12. VICTORIAN TERRACE & WASH HOUSE
13. FRIED FISH DEALERS
14. COBBLER'S SHOP
15. NEW INN PUBLIC HOUSE & CLUB ROOM



16. BOYS BRIGADE HUT
17. BUTCHERS
18. THE IRON FOUNDRY
19. STABLES
20. PRINTING SHOP
21. COALPORT CHINA AT BLISTS HILL
22. DECORATIVE PLASTERERS
23. TINSMITHS
24. MACHINE SHOP
25. MASONS YARD
26. LEE DINGLE PLAYWAY BRIDGE
27. PLEASURE GARDENS
28. LOCKSMITHS
29. WINDING ENGINE
30. THE TRAVITICK SHED
31. BRICK & TILE WORKS
32. MINE SHAFT
33. CANDLE FACTORY
34. SAW MILL & UNDERTAKERS

35. HARNESSMAKERS
36. BAKERY (BREAD ETC. SOLD DAILY)
37. ESTATE OFFICE & DOCTORS SURGERY
38. GOSPEL CAR
39. DUKE OF SUTHERLAND
40. COTTAGE
41. G.R. MORTON IRONWORKS
42. BLAST FURNACES
43. IRONWORKS OFFICE
44. VICTORIAN FAIRGROUND
45. BLACKSMITHS
46. FOREST GLEN
47. REFRESHMENT PAVILION
48. STECHLEY BOARD SCHOOL
49. DAVID & SAMPOSON BLOWING ENGINES
50. SPRAY - LOWER SEVERN TROW
51. THE GREEN
52. INCLINED LIFT - TO AVOID THE HILL

53. CLAY MINE RAILWAY
54. SQUATTER COTTAGE
55. SHELTON TOLLHOUSE
56. MISSION CHURCH
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SHIRE HORSES ARE AT WORK ALL TIMES
OF THE DAY-DOGS MUST BE KEPT ON A LEAD.

CANAL TOWPATH TO
INCLINED LIFT AND HAY
INCLINED PLANE

INCLINED LIFT - TO AVOID THE HILL



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BLISTS HILL
.VICTORIAN TOWN.

ACCESS GUIDES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE ENTRANCE AND ALSO INSIDE THE BANK (2). THE INCLINED LIFT (50) IS AVAILABLE FOR VISITOR USE. IT CONNECTS THE CANAL TOWPATH TO THE LOWER SITE.



EXHIBIT WITH DEMONSTRATOR (MOST DAYS)



EXHIBIT WITHOUT DEMONSTRATOR



ORIGINAL FEATURE OF THE SITE.

FOR THE SAFETY & ENJOYMENT OF

ENTRANCE TOILETS

The first set of available toilets are located outside the museum next to the visitor centre entrance. These toilets have the most available cubicles and are ideal for large groups to use on entry. Baby changing facilities and accessible toilets are available. Please note that the hand dryers within this area are loud.



Toilets to the left of the entrance



VISION



HEARING

SHOP AND VISITOR CENTRE

Access to Blists Hill Victorian Town is through the Visitor Centre. An internal lift to the first floor, Visitor Centre Café and Victorian Town is available. This area can become busy with large groups and therefore it may be loud within this space. Watch the audiovisual as you enter, to learn more about Blists Hill Victorian Town.

Please note that the stairway leading up to the town is dark. There is an all terrain mobility scooter available for visitor use on a first come, first serve basis—please ask at front of house for assistance.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

ENTRANCE CAFÉ

There is a lift available to bring you onto the level of the entrance café. Here you will smell the delicious food, hear the chatter of other visitors and the noises of the drinks machines in use. There is an all terrain mobility scooter outside the café— available for visitor use on a first come, first serve basis.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

ENTERING THE VICTORIAN TOWN

You will move from the dark interior of the gallery to the light of the outdoors onto a shale roadway. You have now entered the Victorian era!



VISION



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PAVILION

The Pavilion is often used as a space for schools to utilise when visiting the museum and is not open to the public. Please note that the Pavilion is at the top of the site, to your right as you walk out of the entrance gallery.



Turn to your right heading over the railway tracks to reach the Pavilion.



VISION

UPPER SITE

You are in the upper town and able to start exploring the High Street exhibits. A horse bus operates at intervals during the day which may restrict the roadways on occasions. Watch out for any horse manure on the road.



SMELL



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BANK

The bank can be accessed via three steps or by using the ramp to the left-hand side of the building. The bank can become very busy during peak times—especially in the morning. Listen to the clink of the money as you exchange your modern currency for shillings, pounds and pence.



VISION



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TOUCH

CYCLE SHOWROOM

You can view the cycle showroom from behind the barrier in place. This is an open space and can become cool in winter months. There is a small slope down into the exhibit.



VISION

GROCERS

Weigh tea and fold paper tea bags on the Grocers' counter. Feel the difference in temperature between the wooden and marble counters and learn about how food was stored. You can watch the demonstrator using the cash register through a mirror reflection and listen to the sounds that the register makes. There is level access to the front entrance of the Grocers from the block pathway.



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CHEMIST

As you enter the chemist, you will likely notice the scent of carbolic soap. Ask to handle the different medicine bottles and learn to feel the difference between poison and medicine decanters! If a demonstrator is available, they can show you the technique of pill rolling whilst you take in the many fascinating products to behold. Please note that access to the chemist is via a step from the block pathway.



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GOODS' SHED

The goods' shed is often used by school groups as a changing space and lunch room. This is a large space so you may hear a slight echo due to the acoustics of the building. There is level access from the roadway onto the wooden floorboards.



VISION



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TOUCH

BOYS' BRIGADE HUT

The Boys' Brigade Hut is mainly used as a space for school groups or the public during school holidays. There is often a candle tank switched on in the centre of the room for candle dipping workshops. You can smell the candle wax within this space. Be mindful when moving around the room as the tank is hot. There is level access from the roadway onto wooden floorboards.



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

GENERAL DRAPERS AND OUTFITTERS

Feel the weight of the clothing that the average lady would have worn in the Victorian era by lifting the heavy bag on the counter. You will be able to see a variety of different styles of clothing and feel different materials. You may be able to hear the click-clack of the Singer sewing machine if a demonstrator is available. There is level access from the block pathway through double doors.



VISION



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TOUCH

POST OFFICE AND STATIONER

You can learn about morse code and hear the dashes and dots tapped out on the morse code key. On the mantelpiece, you may be able to hear the ticking clock throughout this room. There is an accessible lift to take you up to the museum should you require it. Upstairs in the post office museum, you will be able to hear multiple audio histories of former Royal Mail workers playing simultaneously in different parts of the room. When there are large groups in this area, you may be able to hear their footfalls in the room below.



VISION



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TOUCH

PHOTOGRAPHER

There are many things for you to look at within this exhibit. Ask a demonstrator to look at the stereoscope and the images within. You can pay for your photograph to be taken and you will then dress up in Victorian costume. You may hear the noise from the air conditioning unit within this room. There is a visible flash from the camera and an audible noise if you are having your photograph



SMELL



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TOUCH

FRIED FISH DEALERS

You will be able to smell freshly cooked fish and chips throughout the street as you get closer to the fried fish dealers. Hear the sizzle of the fryers and smell the vinegar as you wait for your delicious meal to be cooked to order. There is level access from the roadway and a barriered queue in place.



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

VICTORIAN TERRACE

As you walk in to the Victorian Terrace, you may see food laid out on the dining table. Depending upon the time of year, candles may be lit. In the kitchen, you may see a demonstrator baking bread next to the roaring fire during colder months. If there is a fire, you will be able to smell it throughout this space. There is level access from the roadway.



VISION



HEARING

SWEETSHOP

Go back in time and browse a variety of traditional sweets on offer within the sweetshop. Listen to the bell above the door ring as you enter the shop. Watch the demonstrator weigh out your confectionary and listen as the harder sweets are poured onto the scales. The demonstrators can show you the traditional cash register if you are using Victorian money. This is a popular exhibit and can get very busy during peak times. There is level access from the roadway.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

PLASTERER

Warmth will welcome you into the plasterers as this space must be well heated to dry out the plaster within the many moulds. Speak to a demonstrator and you will be able to look at and touch the rubber moulds and set plaster on display. You can also touch the plaster columns to your right and feel the surface of these objects. There is level access from the shale roadway.



SMELL



VISION



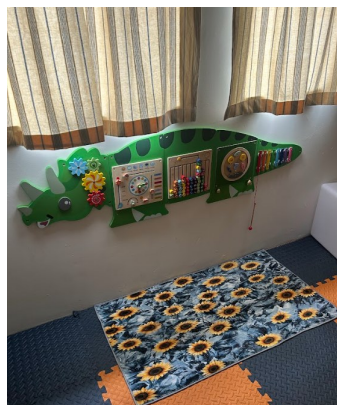
HEARING



TOUCH

THE SUNFLOWER ROOM

The Sunflower room is a dedicated space for children and adults with additional needs who require a quiet and safe space to regulate. Within this room there are tactile items. It is located beside the Tinsmiths behind Canal Street. Please speak to a member of the Front of House Team to gain access using the code provided. There is level access from the roadway.



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

TINSMITH

Look at the equipment used to shape metal. If there is a demonstrator, you will hear the hammering of the copper and be able to watch them making products. This room is connected to the Sunflower sensory room and so you may be able to hear users of the calm space. There is level access from the roadway.



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

WINDING ENGINE

This exhibit is for observation only. You are able to walk through this space; it can be cool depending on the weather. The ground around the winding engine is uneven in places and can become muddy, so please take care when moving around this part of the site. There are two entrances with a tight 90 degree turn in the exhibit and a small step between floorings.



VISION

BRICK MAKING SHED—SCHOOL VISITS

This space is mainly used for school visits and brick making experiences. The general public are able to make bricks during some special events and school holidays. Cold, soft clay and gritty sand are used to mould a brick on rough workbenches. If making a brick, you will hear the brick thumping the tables. There is level access from the roadway.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

LOCKSMITH

You will hear an audio playing with the sounds of the locksmith filling the space. The audio gets louder in places. There are double doors with a small step into the exhibit.



VISION



HEARING

JACK CRABTREE ENGINEERING WORKS

Look at the machinery within the engineering works which was used to shape metal. You will hear the audio of machines at work.



VISION



HEARING

CANDLE FACTORY

You will smell the wax of the candles as you enter this building. This exhibit is dimly-lit. You may observe the candle wheel or the 'donkey' in use –both of which have an audible clunk when returning to their original position. If you watch the wicks being cut you may hear the squeak from the guillotine as it moves upwards. If a candle is burning, it may be smoky. There are candles on the countertop for you to look at and feel. There is slight downhill access over cobblestones through double doors into the exhibit.



SMELL



VISION



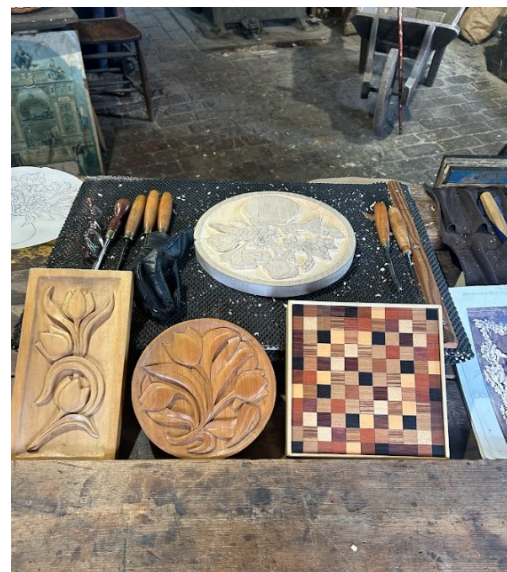
HEARING



TOUCH

SAW MILL AND UNDERTAKERS

Have a look at the tools and products in this exhibit. If there is a demonstrator, you may see them carving wood or smell the bee's wax polish. Look at the bricks underfoot; you may notice that they're uneven in places. In the yard, to the left of the sawmill you may see and hear demonstrations with the horses being harnessed for talks or being washed. There are two entry points: a step into the front doorway and a side entry over a paved area via a ramped step.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

BAKERY

Smell the scents of cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger as fresh bread and other goods are freshly baked in the bakery. Through the door at the back, you will be able to observe demonstrators preparing different products. You may hear the creak from the proving cupboard door or the oven doors being opened and closed. Look at all of the delicious baked goods available to buy on the shelves. The bakery is situated slightly down 'Furnace Bank', with a short ramp into exhibit.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

ESTATE OFFICE

Observe the ledgers and office equipment within this building. You will also be able to view a doctor's surgery. Look at the furniture in this space and compare it to the modern day. The estate office is located on 'Furnace Bank' which is steep and uneven in places. There are benches to the left and right hand sides should you need a rest stop.



VISION

DUKE OF SUTHERLAND COTTAGE

Within the Duke of Sutherland's cottage, you may see a demonstrator preparing food. During the winter months, a fire will heat the main sitting room and you will be able to hear the crackle of the logs being placed upon it. Please note that the cottage is further down 'Furnace Bank' which is a steep decline. There is level access to the exhibit from the roadway. There is limited space within the exhibit and mats underfoot.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

FAIRGROUND

The music playing from the fairground can be heard from many of the exhibits on the lower site including: the Forest Glen, the Stirchley Board School, the Squatter's cottage and the Shelton Toll House. This area can become loud and busy during peak times.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

BLACKSMITHS

If demonstrations are being held within the blacksmiths you, will hear metal being hammered throughout the lower site. You could hear the hiss of the bellows. You will feel the heat from the forge if it is lit and see and smell the smoke from the hearth. There is a small step at the entry at the front and level access from the exit.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

FOREST GLEN REFRESHMENT PAVILION

The Forest Glen Refreshment Pavilion offers food and drink for visitors to the lower site. You will be able to purchase hot and cold drinks and food here. Sounds of the coffee machines can be heard throughout the restaurant area.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

STIRCHLEY BOARD SCHOOL

You will often see children on school visits going into the schoolroom in costume. You will be able to sit at slanted, wooden desks in rows. You can hear the scratch of slate pencils writing on slates. During winter months a fire will be burning. There is a step at the doorway into the front entrance or alternatively a ramp at the side entrance.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

INCLINED LIFT

The inclined lift connects the upper and lower site. The lift is not currently in operation.



VISION



HEARING

SQUATTER'S COTTAGE

Mind your head as you enter the low doorframe of the Squatter's cottage. Within you will be able to see what life was like for poorer families. If a demonstrator is present, you may see them preparing food over the fire. This exhibit is dimly-lit and cold to enter so there will likely be the sounds of a lit fire in the background. There is an uneven pathway from either entrance. Please note that there is a restricted door width into the cottage.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

SHELTON TOLLHOUSE

You may have the opportunity to see a demonstrator baking in the back room of the Toll House and using the open fire to cook on. You may note the smell of carbolic soap within this space too. Please note that there is a small step into the front room and a restricted door width into the backroom.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

MISSION CHURCH

The Mission Church is an observation only area. Look through the railings on the doorway and see look at the pews, lectern, brass cross and alms dish. There are stone steps to access the observation area for the church.



VISION



HEARING

MADELEY WOOD CO. OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

The Madeley Wood Outdoor Adventure offers play equipment for both younger and older children. This space can become noisy and busy during peak times.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



TOUCH

PORTABLE ENGINE SHED

Observe this small steam engine crushing bricks and speak to the demonstrator for an explanation about how this engine works. You can see and smell the smoke and hear the noise of the boiler building pressure.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

PRINTING SHOP

As you make your way back to the top of the site up the hill, you will come to final exhibits, including the printing shop. You may be able to smell the ink used within this room and occasionally the solvent. There is a narrow standing area; this exhibit can become busy quickly. You may be able to watch demonstrations or get involved in printing posters— try not to get too inky! Access is via a slab pathway and a small step into the shop. There is also a cob-ble ramp leading through the double doors.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING



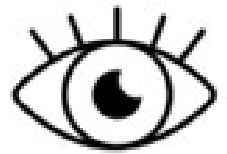
TOUCH

STABLES

The stables for some of the horses are located next to the Printing Shop. You may hear some of the horses trying to catch your attention. Please respect the barrier in place. Note that this is a cobbled courtyard.



SMELL



VISION

BUTCHERS

This exhibit is observation only. Look at the different equipment used in a traditional butchers shop. You may be able to hear the horses from the stables next to this building. Please be aware that there are taxidermy animals in this exhibit. There is a small step at the entrance to this exhibit.



VISION

NEW INN PUB

As you walk by the New Inn Pub, you may hear songs from the daily sing-a-long coming from the inside the building. The pub is often filled with lots of customers. You can purchase refreshments here. There is a front corner entrance with a single step from the pathway.



SMELL



VISION



HEARING

IRONBRIDGE
Valley of Invention