

ELDON HOUSE HERITAGE SITE AND GARDENS

# ACCESSIBILITY PLAN



2023-2025

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# STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT



Eldon House Heritage Site and Gardens endeavors to provide its services and programs in a way that respects the independence and dignity of all persons and encourages integration and equality of opportunity. The Museum is committed to preventing, identifying, and removing barriers that impede the ability of persons with disabilities to access our services and programs. We are committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access and benefit from our services in the same place and in a similar way as other customers whenever possible. These strategies apply to members of the public, suppliers, employees, and volunteers, and they are an integral part of our commitment to cultivate a diverse and inclusive workplace and community.

We understand that accessibility is an ongoing process. People with disabilities are the experts when it comes to their own experiences with accessibility and barriers. We are committed to listening to people with disabilities, and to improve accessibility at the Museum. Eldon House is committed to being responsive in our approach to inclusion and access.

Eldon House endorses the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the regulations passed pursuant to the Act, specifically Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Through this document, Eldon House outlines its established and implemented practices and procedures consistent with its goal of compliance, as well as its commitment to excellent customer service for all, and is committed to meeting the requirements of applicable legislation, including the Ontario Human Rights Code and Accessible Canada Act (ACA).



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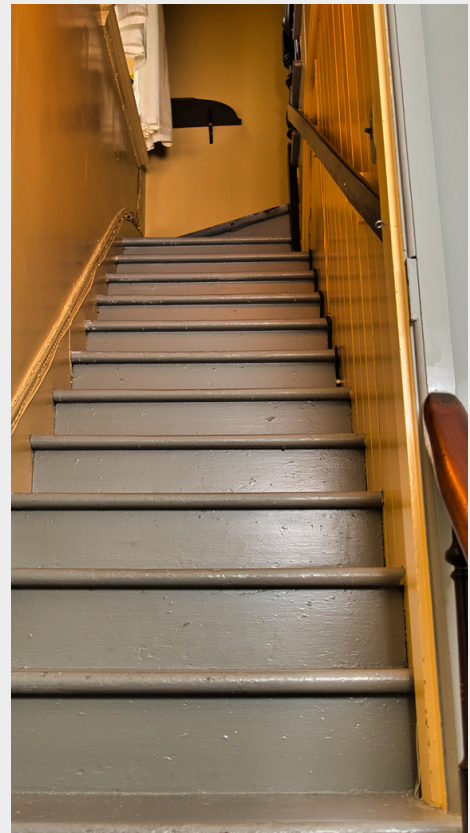
## THE PROVISION OF GOODS AND SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Eldon House will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality;
- Considering individual needs when providing goods and services;
- Allowing customers with disabilities to access goods and services at their own pace and in their own way as long as this does not present a safety risk to themselves or to others;
- Using alternative methods, when possible, to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place, and in a similar manner.

### ACCESSIBILITY AND THE ELDON HOUSE SITE

Eldon House and its Interpretive Centre are two separate buildings and are linked by exterior pathways in the landscaped grounds. The Interpretive Centre is fully accessible and houses the FADS restrooms that serve the site. Due to the historic nature of the main Museum building, there is limited physical accessibility to the upper floor of the home. A graded walkway leads to the front door of Eldon House and provides access to the main floor, however there is no elevator or ramp to the upper level. Alternative means of experiencing the upper floor are available for all visitors including still images and a comprehensive video.





## **Communication**

We will make reasonable efforts to communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. Eldon House is committed to training its members who communicate with customers on how to interact and engage with people with different types of disabilities.

Where possible, Eldon House provides alternative accommodation to assist in communication, including but not limited to, foreign language translation documents, large print and braille versions of interpretive materials, and video-based tours of the upper floor of the Museum that is not accessible to people with mobility devices. All visual communication will be designed with AODA standards in mind, including but not limited to: print material, exhibition text, website design and social media messaging.

## **Assistive Devices**

People with disabilities may use their own personal assistive devices, or those that may be provided by Eldon House while obtaining any goods and services provided on our publicly accessible premises.

A person with a disability may enter any part of our premises that are open to the public with an assistive device, unless not allowed by law. If barriers to the use of an assistive device exist at our premises, these barriers, where reasonably possible, will be removed.

## **Support Persons**

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on the Eldon House premises. Fees for any ticketed program will not be charged for support persons. A “support person” means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies them in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods or services.

Eldon House reserves the right to require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises if a support person is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

## **Service Animals**

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public except where animals are not allowed by law. Where an animal is not allowed by law, alternate options will be explored to provide the service to the person with a disability.

## **Financial Accessibility**

Eldon House aims to remain accessible to a diverse audience and designs its programs and operations accordingly. The Museum is open to the public on a “donation” basis and is active in several partnerships that remove financial barrier to visitors. Eldon House leads outreach programs to groups who may not physically be able to access the Museum in-person, and offers a variety of tactile, digital, and specialized programs funded by grant subsidies.

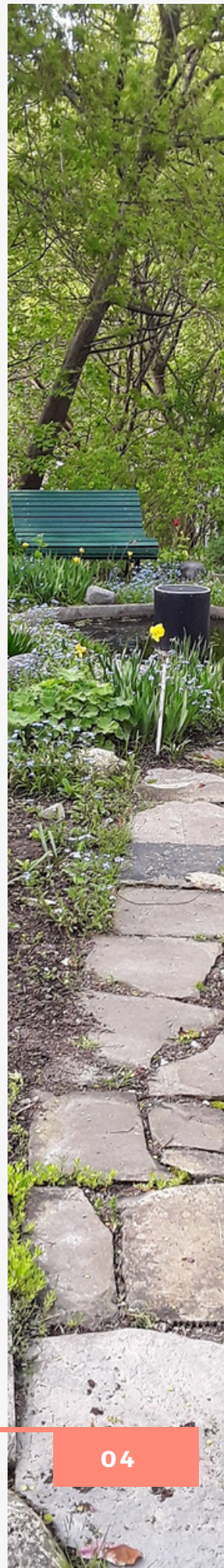
## **Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion**

Eldon House recognizes the rich diversity of culture that engages with the Museum and aims to treat each with respect, dignity, and inclusion, as outlined in our Cultural Equity Statement. Interpretive introductions and information have been translated in over twenty languages and are available to visitors as they begin their museum experience. Eldon House identifies as a safe space for all and upholds the principles of anti-racism, equity, and inclusion in all areas of operations.

## **NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTIONS**

Eldon House will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption is expected to last, and a description of any alternative facilities or services, if available. In some circumstances (such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions), advance notice may not be possible, however Eldon House will aim to provide alternatives as available.

The notice will be placed on the Eldon House’s website, social media platforms, and on site at the Museum.





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## TRAINING FOR STAFF

Eldon House will provide training to all staff who deal with customers or third parties on our behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies and procedures.

Training will include:

- The purpose of the AODA and the requirements of the customer service standard;
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- How to appropriately interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require assistance of a service animal or support person;
- What to do if a person with a disability has difficulty accessing the Museum's goods and services or publicly accessible premises;
- All Eldon House and City of London policies, practices, and procedures relating to the customer service standard;
- Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis in the goal of continuous improvement when changes are made to these policies, practices, and procedures.



## ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMUNICATION WITH ELDON HOUSE

Anyone who wishes to contact the Museum to discuss the manner in which Eldon House provides goods and services to people with disabilities can contact the Eldon House by phone, email, social media, through our website, in person or via the visitor comment book located at the front entrance to the historic home.

Where possible, concerns will be addressed immediately. However, some concerns may require more time and consideration. Customers can expect to hear back from Eldon House promptly, either with details on the resolution of the concern or, in more complex cases, on the steps being taken by Eldon House to resolve the concern.

Customers can submit feedback to:

E. [info@eldonhouse.ca](mailto:info@eldonhouse.ca)

A. 481 Ridout St. N., London ON N6A 2P6

T. 519-661-5169

W. [www.eldonhouse.ca](http://www.eldonhouse.ca)

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- All Eldon House Museum Standard and Organizational polices, including, but not limited to Interpretation and Education Policy, Physical Plant Policy, Community Policy, Human Resources Policy, Governance Policy, Exhibition Policy, Communication Policy, Accessibility Policy.
- Eldon House Cultural Equity Statement
- City of London Accessibility Plan
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Accessible Canada Act