Visual Story – Ripon Workhouse Museum (Vagrants' Block)

On my visit to the Workhouse Museum, there are lots of things I might:

- See
- Hear
- Touch/Feel
- Smell
- Interact with

This visual story will take me on a specific route around the museum. This is the route most visitors follow.

Visual Story – Ripon Workhouse Museum (Vagrants' Block)

This visual story document will only take me through the **first** half of the museum (Vagrants' block).

I can find the document for the Residents' block visual story on the Ripon Museums website, or by clicking this link: https://riponmuseums.co.uk/app/uploads/2026/09/Visual-Story–Workhouse-Museum-Residents-Block-compressed.pdf

When I arrive at the Workhouse Museum...

I will see a brick building with a gated entrance.

I might hear noise from cars, and people talking.



To get to the entrance...

I can go through the entrance gate.

I can go along the path and enter using the glass doors.



When I enter the museum…

I should go through the doorway on the left to enter the Reception.



When I enter the museum...

I will be told about the museum by a Front Desk Volunteer.

I will be asked if I would like to buy an entry ticket.

I can ask them questions about how I should navigate the museum.



Navigating the museum...

The Workhouse museum has two main buildings, called 'blocks'. The museum entrance is in the Vagrants' block.

Later, I can visit the other block, called the Residents' block.

I can also visit the garden behind the Residents' block.

I can choose if I want to visit all or part of the museum.

If I want to go to the toilet...

The toilets are located to the right of the entrance.

There are signs that will direct me to the toilets.

There are gender-neutral and disabled toilets.

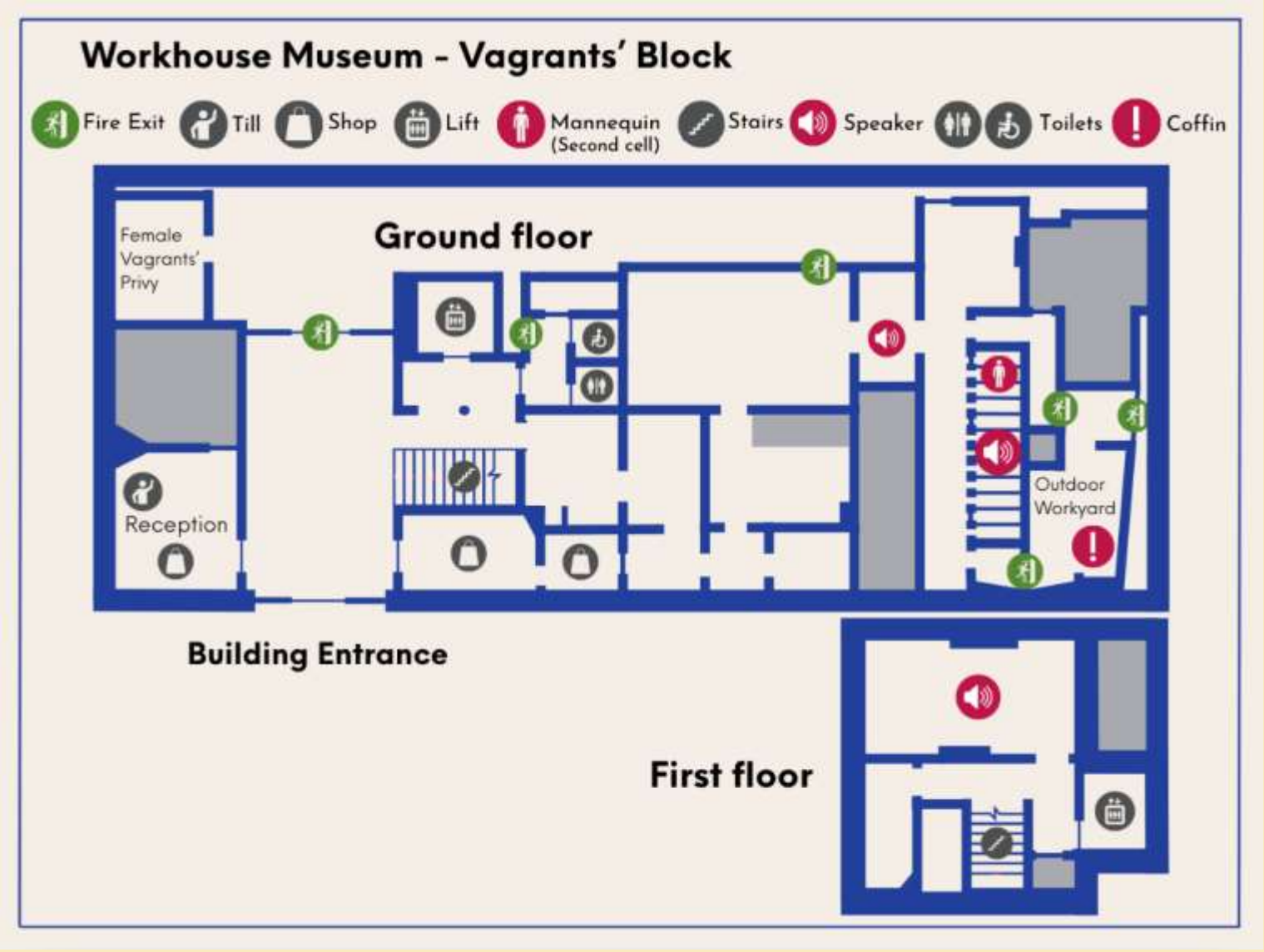
There are baby changing facilities in the disabled toilet.



Visiting the Vagrants' block...

On the ground floor, I will find the Vagrants' section of the museum, and the shop.

There are sensory bags I can use in the entrance hall.



Entering the exhibition...

I should exit the Reception and go through the glass doors on my left.

I should turn right and go to the entrance door labelled 'Start'.

I should go through the door to enter the exhibition.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

If I go through the entrance door, I will enter a room called the Receiving Ward.

I will see two other doors in the room.

I will hear noises of coughing and water sloshing from a speaker.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

I should go through the light grey doorway labelled 'VAGRANTS'.

I will enter the Vagrants' Bathroom.

The noise from the speaker will be louder here.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

When I go through the next door, I should turn left.

I will enter the Vagrant Dayroom.

There are chairs and a bench I can choose to sit on.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

I should exit the room through the same doorway.

I will enter a long hallway with lots of cells.

Most of the cells have open doors. I can choose if I want to enter them.

I may hear noise from speakers.



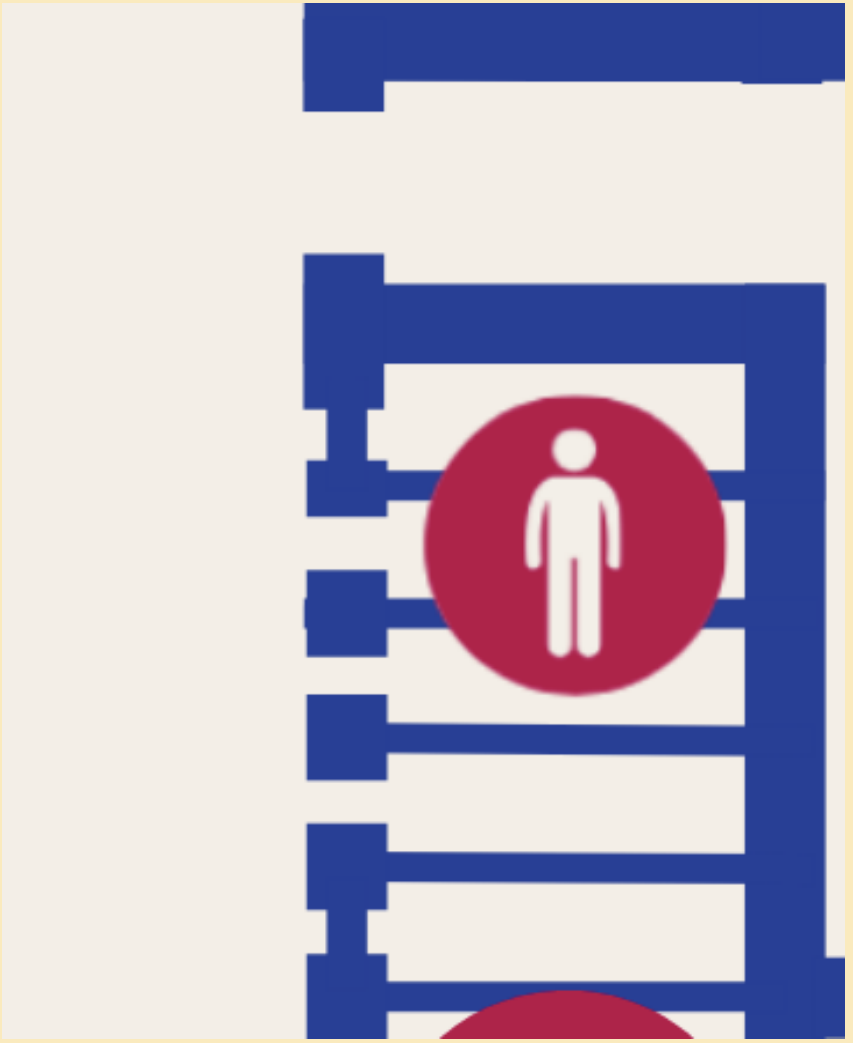
In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

There is a mannequin in the second cell.

It is lying down and covered by a blanket.

The door to this cell is open.

I can choose to look at this or go past it.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

I can choose to close the door to the seventh cell.

The door does not close fully.

There is a speaker in this room playing sounds, including heavy footsteps, groaning, and high-pitched noises.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

At the end of the hallway, there is a door on my left.

I should go through the doorway.

I will enter the Tramp Major's Room.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

If I go through the next doorway, I will enter the Vagrants' Workyard.

It might be bright, hot, or cold outside.

If I do not want to go outside, I can turn around and return to the Receiving Ward.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

There is a closed wooden coffin near the entrance of the Vagrants' Workyard.

I can choose to walk past it or return to the Receiving Ward.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

When I want to leave the Vagrants' Workyard, I should go to the other end of the yard.

I should go through the open doorway on my left.

I will enter a narrow hallway.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

At the end of the hallway, I should turn left.

I should walk forward until I enter the Receiving Ward.





In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

In the Receiving Ward, I should turn left.

I should go through the black doorway labelled 'PAUPERS'.

If I go through the doorway, I will enter the De-infesting room.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

After I go through the De-infesting room, I can choose to turn left or right.

If I want to enter the Uniform Store, I should turn left.

If I do not want to enter the Uniform Store, I should turn right.



If I want to enter the Uniform Store...

I can choose to try on a uniform.

The uniforms may be itchy and small. They are all child-sized.

When I am ready to leave the Uniform Store, I should exit through the doorway and go forward.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

I will go through two small rooms connected by a doorway.

There are lots of signs with writing on them.



In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

When I go forwards,
I will enter the Boiler Room.

I may hear people talking.

When I go through the next door, I will return to the entrance hall.



Visiting the First Floor

On the first floor, I will find the Waiting Room and the Guardians' Room.



To get to the first floor...

I can choose to go up the stairs or use the lift.
The stairs are worn and uneven.





On the first floor...

If I turn left at the top of the stairs, I will enter the Waiting Room.

From the lift, I should go through the open doorway in front of me.

I may hear banging, footsteps, and scratching sounds from a speaker.



On the first floor...

If I turn right at the top of the stairs, I will enter the Guardians' Room.

From the lift, I should turn right.

The noise from the speaker is louder in this room.



When I am ready to continue viewing the exhibition…

I can go down the stairs or use the lift to go to the ground floor.





In the Vagrants' Block Exhibition...

I should exit through the glass doors to the right of the stairs.

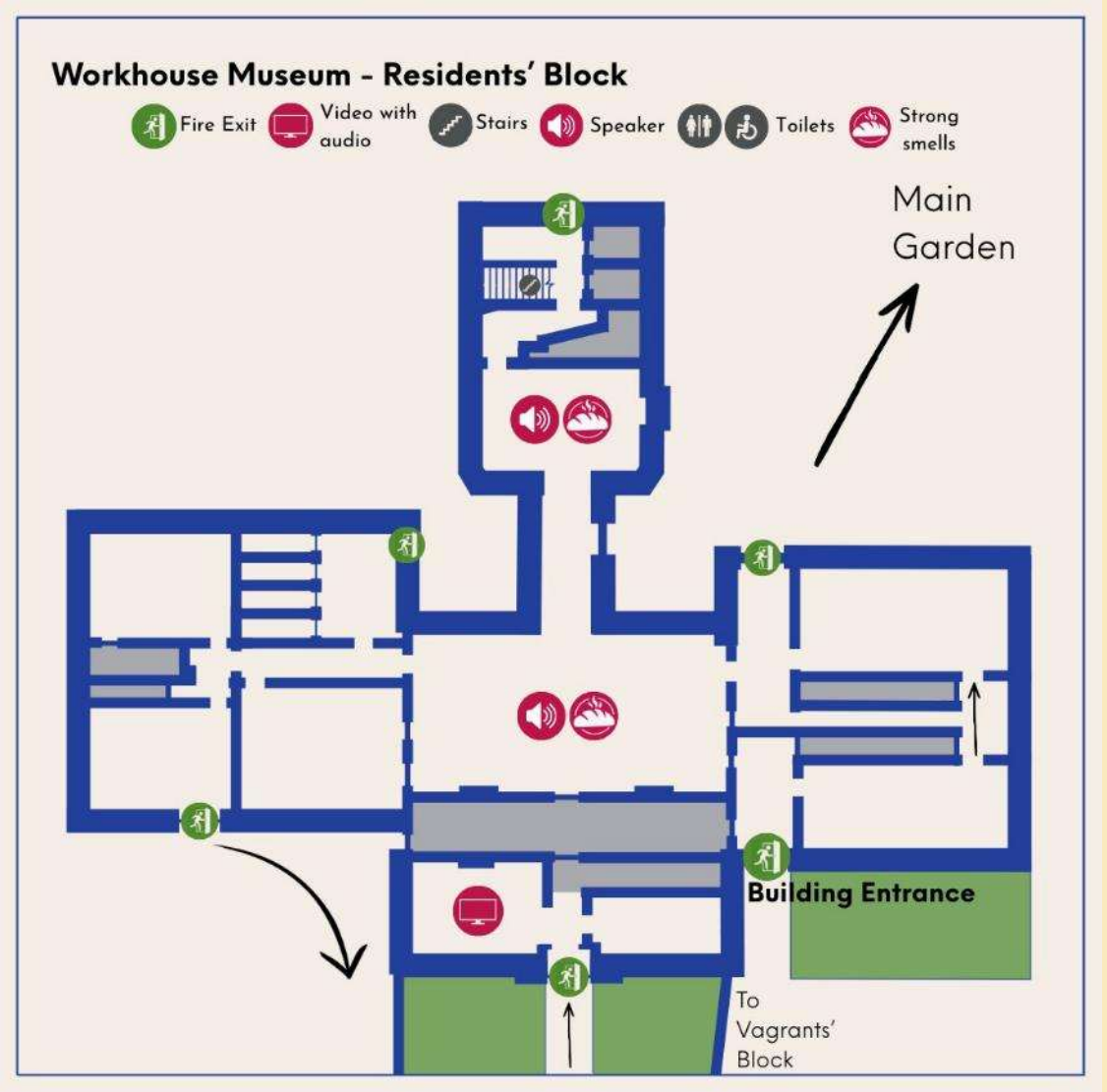
I can choose to go left and see the Female Vagrant Privy.



If I want to view the Residents' Block...

For the visual story of the Residents' Block, I should go to the separate document.

I can find it on the Ripon Museums website or by clicking this link: [hyperlink]



If I want to leave the museum...

If I want to leave the museum **without** visiting the Residents' block, I should go to the entrance hall.

I should go through the glass doors and along the pathway to the main road.

I may hear noise from cars and people talking.



If I want to go to the shop…

I can choose to buy something from the shop.

The main shop is through the doorway to the right of the stairs in the entrance hall.

I should pay for things at the Front Desk.

Main shop:



Extra information — Schools

Sometimes, a group of school children will be visiting the museum.

I will be told by the Front Desk Volunteer if there is currently a school visit.

I might see lots of people and hear loud voices.

I can choose whether I still want to enter the museum.

