



MuseumSheffield

Museums Sheffield Access Policy

This Access Policy maps how Museums Sheffield will ensure access to the collections, exhibitions, displays and related programmes for the widest possible audience regardless of age, background or ability. It is our policy to facilitate access to all of our museums and galleries, and to the collections we care for, for all our visitors and staff, physically, intellectually and electronically, and to take into account their physical, intellectual and sensory requirements.

Museums Sheffield's purpose is embedded in its charitable objectives: *'The advancement of education of the public through the provision, maintenance and support of museums, art and craft galleries within Sheffield and its environs'*

1. Vision and Mission

Our vision: *inspirational museums and galleries where people can reflect upon the past question the present and imagine the future*

Our mission *is to connect with our visitors, share stories about Sheffield and the wider world, and care for the city's collections*

2. Definition of Access

We define access as something that is made possible when physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological, attitudinal and emotional barriers are removed or reduced.

People need to be able to access the museums and galleries, the collections and our activities, feel welcomed by staff, and find the environment appropriate to their needs. Museums Sheffield recognises that barriers exist within the daily operation of our museums and galleries. Access should be a core function of each site's (Weston Park Museum, Millennium Gallery, Graves Gallery and Museums Sheffield Store) operations, to ensure that audiences' needs are continually met.

3. The Policy

Museums Sheffield welcomes all visitors to its premises and is committed to fully implementing its obligations as an employer and service provider under the Equality Act 2010. We believe that an improvement in access to its facilities and services for disabled people has a direct and positive impact on the quality of experience for all users of the Museum. Our policy is to build accessibility into everything we do to develop and improve the service. Our commitment is long term and our policy is to make continuous improvements as our resources permit. This policy will be reviewed, assessed and evaluated with the involvement of on-going consultation with the community.

4. Our Venues

Staff will welcome and assist visitors according to their needs, ensuring visitor requirements are met as much as resources allow. Staff will receive training in areas of awareness and legislation appropriate to their roles and needs.

Where possible, our venues will provide baby changing facilities, access and parking for pushchairs, on site wheelchairs, and seating, for the comfort and ease of visitors

5. Collections, exhibitions and displays

Museums Sheffield manages the city's collections to promote, maintain, improve and advance public education. This includes the acquisition, care, management and display of collections for the public benefit. We will ensure that access to the collections is balanced with the need to preserve these collections for future generations.

We will endeavour to make our displays and exhibitions accessible by presenting the collections and designing spaces in order to maximise access. We will provide interpretation in a range of formats such as audio, video, large print and graphics. Text is edited to a high standard, ensuring it is easy to read and understood by a wide audience base. Text within marketing and learning print will also follow our text guidelines. Exhibition layouts will be carefully planned to ensure physical access is maintained as much as possible. Our sites have differing levels of physical accessibility due to security requirements (Museum Sheffield Store) or building layout (Graves Gallery), but we will endeavour to make them as accessible as possible.

A significant proportion of the city's collections are held in store and we are committed to providing access to these collections where ever possible. Visitors (including small groups) can make an appointment to view an item in Museums Sheffield store by contacting the relevant member of Curatorial staff and all possible efforts will be made to facilitate that access. In certain circumstances restrictions will prevent physical access to an object or archive, for example if it is on loan or in an inaccessible position within the store, however we hope to accommodate the majority of requests.

Information about displays and exhibitions is available, if requested, in advance of visits. Museums Sheffield is committed to free admission for all its visitors. Where ever possible, special exhibitions will not incur charges.

6. Marketing

Our publicity information is available in a range of formats (as resources allow) and aims to keep the public informed about our exhibitions, displays and event programmes. (We are currently working on our website to ensure that we highlight opportunities to overcome physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological, attitudinal and emotional barriers and so increase access). We will also work with partner organisations to disseminate this information to different audiences with a range of abilities.

7. Learning

All our sites provide a range of experiences tailored to different audiences and their needs, where possible.

Events and activities are programmed throughout the year for people with a wide range of abilities. We are committed to providing a series of free talks and events to which everyone is welcome.

Where ever possible, appropriate activities will be programmed with the aim of overcoming specific barriers to access e.g. activities for Learning Disability Week, projects aimed at overcoming cultural or attitudinal barriers.

We recognise that not all of our audience will be able to access our sites, so where resources allow we will proactively develop and deliver offsite activities designed in consultation with key audiences.

Sharing a substantial proportion of the city's collections on the Museum Sheffield website over recent years has considerably increased access by users nationally and internationally. Increasing online access to collections continues to be a key part of our collections management plan.

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