

## Museums Worcestershire - Access Policy Statement

<b>Approval date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2016 tbc
<b>Review date</b>	<p>We will review the access policy every three years to ensure it is in line with national guidelines and standards.</p> <p>Museums Worcestershire will incorporate actions that arise from this policy in the strategic plan, and deliver each year through the action plan.</p> <p>This policy will be reviewed on or before March 2019.</p>
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>We aim to enrich the lives of people from Worcestershire and beyond.</p> <p>We want to inspire them to deepen their knowledge of the City and County and make sense of the world.</p> <p>We will do this by sharing our passion for the unique art, artefacts and stories that have shaped the identity of Worcestershire and its county town for over 2000 years.</p> <p>Museums Worcestershire roles are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enable shared experiences, discovery and interaction at the County Museum at Hartlebury Castle, The Commandery, Worcester City Art Gallery &amp; Museum, Museum on the Move and the joint collections store.</li><li>• Encourage understanding through the preservation and interpretation of the museum collections of Worcester City Council and Worcestershire County Council.</li><li>• Expand perspectives and opportunities by supporting other museums and organisations in Worcestershire and beyond.</li><li>• Enrich the cultural heritage and future of Worcestershire and beyond.</li></ul>
<b>Ethics and legislation</b>	<p>Museums Worcestershire seeks to provide facilities and opportunities which are accessible to all visitors, taking account, wherever possible, of any specific access needs they may have.</p>

During induction we ensure that staff and volunteers are made aware of our equality expectations and of relevant parts of the Equality Act, 2010. . We value diversity among our volunteers and take all reasonable steps to support them in their volunteer roles. Our measures and operating practice are informed by the Equality Act 2010.

‘...so far as is reasonably practicable, to approximate the access enjoyed by disabled people to that enjoyed by the rest of the public. The purpose of the duty to make reasonable adjustments is to provide access to a service as close as it is reasonably possible to get to the standard normally offered to the public at large’

*Equality Act 2010 Statutory Code of Practice: Services, Public Functions and Associations, 2011, page 90, 7.4*

## **Access Assessments**

Museums Worcestershire are committed to assessing, identifying and addressing both access to our facilities and services access issues by means of internal checklists, access audits, or working with local service user or advocacy groups.

We endeavour to continually assess access within Museums Worcestershire. Each of the venues aims to have a minimum of one audit per year for varying forms of access. For any significant changes at any site, access audits will take place as part of the planning process.

Our commitment to accessibility extends to our staff, volunteers and work placements as well as visitors.

We are committed to ongoing training in access issues for staff and volunteers.

## **User Needs**

To eliminate barriers and ensure equality of access we will consider the following forms of accessibility. These are considered during our temporary exhibitions, permanent displays and interpretation, building layout and learning and outreach:

- Physical – to enable people with physical disabilities to reach and appreciate every part of the museum service. To take into account the needs of older people and of people caring for others.
- Sensory – to enable visitors with impaired vision or hearing to enjoy the museum’s buildings and collections.

- Intellectual – We recognise that people have different learning styles and abilities and we will design our displays to reflect this and provide additional explanation, where required. We also aim to ensure people with learning difficulties can engage with and enjoy the museums and the collections across Museums Worcestershire.
- Cultural – to consider the needs of people for whom English is not their first language, or whose knowledge of English history and culture may be limited.
- Attitudinal / Emotional – to ensure the museum environment and museum staff are welcoming to visitors from all sections of the community in line with our Customer Care Policy.
- Financial – when reviewing our admission charges we will take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access for some groups.

**Reference to other policies**

There are no access restrictions to the Museums Worcestershire collections. Collections that are not on display are accessible by appointment at the collections store.

Please refer to the Collections Care and Conservation Policy, and Documentation Policy for further information.

**Other languages**

Museums Worcestershire, through Worcestershire County Council, will provide Braille, large print and electronic information wherever practicable, on request. Museums Worcestershire and Worcestershire County Council will also assess requests for alternative languages in print material as a matter of good practice, and look to fulfil these requests where possible.