

The Horniman Museum Disability Equality Scheme

The Horniman Museum is committed to offering the widest possible access for our audience and to developing resources which improve access to information and the collections.

Introduction

General Duty

The Disability Equality Duty (DED) came into force on 4 December 2006. This is a new statutory duty on the public sector to promote disability equality. It requires all public bodies to actively look at ways of ensuring that disabled people are treated equally in terms of Employment, Access and Services.

The new duty is both statutory and proactive in nature which means the Museum must now anticipate disabled peoples requirements when providing services. Meeting the duty's requirements embeds equality for disabled people into the Museum culture in practical and demonstrated ways.

The Disability Equality Scheme is an evaluation tool which, with the essential involvement of disabled people, identifies barriers and will influence the way the museum undertakes its day to day business

Specific Duty

The Horniman Museum is covered by specific duties and must therefore produce a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), which sets out a framework to assist in meeting the general duty. The Museum must:

- Publish this Disability Equality Scheme (including within it an Action Plan)
- Involve disabled people in producing the Scheme and Action Plan
- Demonstrate they have taken actions in the Scheme and achieved appropriate outcomes
- Report on progress
- Review and revise the Scheme

Publication

The Horniman Museum's Disability Equality Scheme will be published on our website. Other formats will be made available, e.g. Large Print, audio and Braille

The Disability Equality Scheme will provide the essential framework for promoting disability equality across the Museum and for making a positive and lasting difference to the experiences of our disabled staff and visitors.

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Involvement

The Museum has had an Access Working Group since 1999, which has produced a Disability Policy and a continuing action plan.

In June 2006 the Museum Access Group met with a representative from Lewisham disability Coalition. We have now agreed that this representative will act as a facilitator to an external access group who will work with the Museum, reviewing policies and working in a very practical way with the museum on new Gallery and Garden projects that will enable the Museum to provide the best possible services for disable visitors and staff.

Information Gathering

To produce a Disability Equality Scheme information gathering is required regarding how the Museum performs in the areas of Employment, Access and Services.

Impact assessments are an essential tool for achieving disability equality. As part of the Disability Equality Scheme the Museum must include a statement of methods for assessing the impact and potential impact of our policies on equality for disabled persons.

Under the new duty all Disability Equality Schemes should include a statement covering the organisation's methods for assessing the impact of policies on disability equality. Impact assessments of all of our current practices policies and procedures will be carried out during this year.

An impact assessment should not be an end in itself. It should identify negative impacts on disabled people, enabling us to modify the policy or practice.

Review

A new Action Plan will be produced as a result of the impact assessments carried out and will be reviewed annually our External Access Group and reported to our Senior Management Team

The Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed every three years by the External Access Group and through feedback from regular meetings.

The review will outline the actions taken as set out in the Action Plan, or justify why it was unreasonable or impractical to carry these actions out. It will also include the results of any information gathering and what will be done with that information.