

Horniman Museum Disability Policy

This document sets out the Policy of the Horniman Museum and Gardens on its provision for disabled visitors and staff.

The Mission Statement

‘ to encourage a wider appreciation of the World, its peoples and their cultures, and its environments’

- The Trust welcomes all visitors to its premises and is committed to implementing fully its obligations as an employer and service provider under the Disability Discrimination Act. The Trust believes that improvements in access to its facilities and services for disabled people are of general benefit to all visitors and staff.
- The Trust involves all staff members in implementing its Disability Policy, the Code of Practice and Procedures as they develop, and the resulting Action Plan.
- The Trust recognises that to fulfil its obligations to disabled people, all areas of the Museum’s work must take account of the Policy, Code of Practice and Procedures and Action Plan and that disability issues are integrated into its long-term development plans.
- The Trust recognises the role of disabled people in society and therefore seeks to provide equality of opportunity in all areas of its own practice.
- The Trust’s aim is to provide all staff with training on disability issues.
- All staff are committed to providing an effective service for disabled people that takes account of changing provision and facilities.

Collections

The Trust is committed to providing ways to enable both visitors and staff to achieve full physical, intellectual and sensory access to the collections.

Where physical access poses severe problems, as with the Study Collections Centre and the Library, alternative arrangements will be made to provide some experience of that part of the collection or service for visitors.

The Trust is committed to developing and publicising programmes and activities that will introduce disabled people to the Museum, its collections and facilities.

Premises

The Trust will endeavour to provide full physical access to all areas of the Museum, Gardens and off site facilities wherever possible and to keep all equipment and facilities in full working order.

The Trust will ensure that, wherever possible, all areas used by both visitors and staff are fully physically accessible and that there are procedures for dealing with access to problem areas such as Personnel.

The attention of any outside body or organisation using the Trust's premises will be drawn to the Disability Policy.

The Trust will ensure that all contracted out services are required to meet the same standards of service as those managed in-house.

Information

The Trust undertakes to provide, as widely as possible, information about the Museum, its facilities and services. The Trust takes account of the needs of disabled visitors to be provided with information concerning access and specific facilities.

The Trust is working towards providing intellectual interpretation of the collections in languages and formats that will meet the widest variety of needs.

The Trust will provide plans and access information in alternative formats such as large print, audiotape, disc, and Braille. Up-to-date recorded information will be available on its facilities, exhibitions, events and activities.

The Trust will ensure that all internal and external information and communications follow good practice guidelines as prescribed by specialist organisations such as the RNIB.

The Trust will subscribe to a Type-Talk service to provide information for people with hearing impairments and endeavour to provide sign interpretation for special events.

Remote services such as the Horniman Museum Web site will be designed to be fully accessible as will any future development for public access to Multi-Mimsy.

The Internet is a useful tool for disabled people to access information and therefore prompt responses to Internet inquiries are a priority.

Links with the Community

The Trust will undertake regular consultation with disabled people to assist in improving and developing the provision of services for disabled visitors, and in the employment of disabled people.

The Trust is committed to developing further its Community Outreach programmes to introduce new audiences to the Museum.

Employment and Training

The Trust is working towards becoming an equal opportunities employer.

As regards the employment of disabled staff, the Museum seeks to encourage and support staff to achieve equality of opportunity for recruitment, employment, training and promotion. The Trust will ensure that staff with disabilities will be provided with appropriate adapted or additional equipment or services. These procedures will be monitored and reviewed regularly.

Safety and Emergency provision

The Trust is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all. Procedures for the safe evacuation of disabled people in an emergency are regularly reviewed and training for staff in these procedures is provided.

Code of Practice and Procedures

The Trust will draw up a Code of Practice and Procedures for all areas of its provision as a service provider and employer. This will be undertaken in consultation with disabled people and representatives of all areas of the Museum's operations. The Trust will designate a member of the Senior Management Team to represent and champion disability issues. This member of staff will be responsible for monitoring the Policy, its associated Code of Practice and Procedures and Action Plan.

Action Plan

The Trust will prepare an Action Plan, approved by the Senior Management Team, setting out the work which will be undertaken by staff to improve access and facilities across the Trust's operations. The Senior Management Team and Heads of Section will take responsibility for implementing the Policy and its associated Code of Practice and Procedures that underpin the Action Plan. The Policy and Action Plan will be taken into account when presenting Annual Reports and management plans.

Consultation and Monitoring

A staff working party will be convened comprising staff representing all sections of the Museum under the jurisdiction of the Senior Management Team. This team will co-ordinate the activities connected to the Disability Policy and Action Plan.

Sources and references

Disability Discrimination Act, 1995
Code of Practice, D of EE, 1999
DCMS Access Policy, Feb 2000
Disability Resource Directory, MGC
Perspectives on Access, MGC
Museums and Galleries Disability Association