



Working in partnership



Access and Inclusion Policy

**Approved by Hull Museums Access and Inclusion Working
Group with advice from Direct Access Limited**

December 2022

Introduction

Hull Museums aim to provide a high quality, accessible experience to all our visitors. We are committed to reducing physical, sensory, cognitive & Neurodivergent, social, geographical, cultural, financial, technological, language and attitudinal barriers to access. We are taking as starting point, removing barriers for members of society with protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act (2010);

- Age
- Disability
- Trans, intersex or gender non-conforming (see 2017 Acas report)
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race

- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- *Lower socioeconomic status* (as added by Arts Council England)

We recognise that improving access provides benefits for everyone. We also recognise that levels of understanding and awareness, circumstances, and policies change, so we are committed to creating an open dialogue with our audiences to allow us to be adaptable and relevant. We recognise the importance of consultation and co-curation in providing an inclusive and accessible service.

Our Values

- We will stay relevant. We will keep up to date with and respond to cultural, social and legal developments and research.
- We will listen and respond to changing needs
- We will celebrate difference and diversity
- We will identify barriers to access and aim to reduce them
- We will be welcoming and inclusive
- We will collaborate with our audiences in all areas of our work
- We will exchange knowledge with partners, colleagues, stakeholders and our audiences
- We will facilitate communication and participation with all our visitors

- We will champion the Social Model of Disability in our work
- We will handle challenging content in a respectful, well-researched and sensitive way.
- We will seek to ensure that disability is represented in programming, exhibitions and our collections.
- We will monitor progress and evaluate outcomes in line with our duties under the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty and measure these against the Arts Council Principles (specifically Inclusivity and Relevance).

Consultation

Our work is informed by ongoing active consultation between us and our current and potential audiences, our stakeholders and our staff. This consultation and feedback

informs our forward planning. We aim to consult in a way which is collaborative and in which our current and potential audience's voices are heard and responded to.

We are committed to establishing a disability access group for regular consultation and engagement on accessibility, using consistent guidelines to ensure that a level of accessibility is established for any consultation and engagement session.

Marketing and Communications

We will seek to ensure that disability is represented in printed and digital marketing.

We aim to reflect the diversity of our audiences in the images used in our printed and digital marketing.

We will present information in a variety of ways and aim to provide accessible versions of our printed materials and films such as Braille, Large-Print, Audio and Tactile.

We will take into account the needs of visitors in the preparation and presentation of publicity material.

We will provide alternative text for any images posted online.

We commit to ensuring that our websites achieve WCAG 2.1 AA7, UK Government minimum standard of accessibility.

We commit to ensuring that Social Media posts are published in accordance with best practice UK Government accessibility guidance.

Our Welcome and Sites Access

Where possible we will be flexible, to respond to the needs of visitors.

We will provide visitors with appropriate access information (how to find us, what to expect and what our facilities are) before they reach our museums including but not limited to Visit Britain accessibility guides. These resources will be updated annually.

Our website will enable people to independently access our services and assist them in planning their visit. We will develop a range of communication methods for getting in touch with us including via social media.

We will facilitate our visitors' arrival and navigation by providing clear and engaging signage which complies with

best practice access guidelines (such as Sign Design Guide, NHS Wayfinding) and is located appropriately for viewing.

We will strive to achieve level access routes into and through each of our museums wherever possible, within the constraints of our historic buildings. Where level access cannot be made available we will offer guidance in navigating appropriate alternative routes.

We will provide clear orientation information that enables all visitors to select their own preferred path around the museum.

Staff will continue to welcome visitors on their arrival and will receive general access and inclusion awareness training to help them effectively meet the needs of different visitors, as well as more specific awareness training such as D/deaf, dementia, visual impairment and autism awareness training.

Facilities including seating, circulation areas and accessible toilets will continue to be available at each site. We are committed to undertaking regular access audits as well as Visitor Attraction Quality Assessment Scheme (VAQAS) visits in order to strive for best practice and highlight areas for improvement.

Where parts of our museums are not physically accessible to all, we aim to create alternatives for those visitors which may include virtual alternatives or physical changes.

We commit to ensuring that the correct procedures are in place to ensure the safe evacuation of disabled people from the building in the event of an emergency including through Evac chair and refuge area procedures and equipment and through PEEPs (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan) cards and procedures for each site.

Access tools, equipment and furniture

We aim to provide loanable access tools at our sites to facilitate visitor engagement. These may include (but are not limited to);

- Audio descriptive guides
- Tactile and braille resources
- Subtitled films
- Large print
- Induction loops (at welcome desks, shop and café counters and as portable loops for events)

We aim to increase and embed our audio descriptive, large print interpretation and British Sign Language (BSL) and subtitled interpretation, in collaboration and consultation with our audiences.

We commit to improving accessibility through procurement by specifying equipment furniture, fixture and fittings in accordance with recognised best practice such as BS8300.

Learning and Engagement

Approach

We will strive to support community initiatives wherever possible.

We commit to engage with disabled people and disability groups by embracing flexible times and locations.

We will take into account barriers to access when developing and delivering sessions.

Our resources and the content of our sessions will reflect the diversity of our local community and our audiences.

We will provide a combination of free and affordable paid activities, consulting with visitors and non-visitors to define 'affordable' activities.

We will develop and maintain partnerships which enable us to engage more with current audiences and develop new ones. By sharing knowledge with these partners we can improve our offer and enhance our staff skills and knowledge.

We will make our sessions as multi-sensory as possible.

Our activities will reflect the different interests of our audiences and build skills bases. We will explore different art forms and themes.

We aim to commission artists for session delivery from diverse backgrounds.

Our self-led resources (trails and backpacks) will be open-ended and encourage enquiry and play. We will design them with the variety of needs of our audiences in mind.

Where possible we will provide remote and additional on-site access to talks and tours through BSL, live captioning, live streaming and Audio descriptive guides.

Operations

We will ask for relevant pre-visit information during bookings processes which will help us to adapt the session to the needs of the learners.

We will provide clear access information online for visitors.

For bookable events or booked school sessions we will provide additional relevant access information to the participants.

Where practical, we will make reasonable adjustments to spaces, room layouts, sessions resources and the running order of sessions to provide a more inclusive experience.

Content

We aim to design sessions which can be tailored to the learning needs and the learning styles of the group or individuals. Our informal activities are designed to appeal to the whole family encouraging intergenerational participation and active engagement with all ages

We will facilitate enhanced access to the collections and collection knowledge through our school and informal sessions.

We will facilitate communication in a variety of verbal and non-verbal ways in our sessions.

We will take into account barriers to access when developing and delivering sessions.

We will provide alternatives where some visitors may not be able to physically access parts of the session.

We aim to provide our digital resources (websites, downloadable resources and social media) in different accessible formats.

Exhibitions and Interpretation

We will deliver an inclusive programme of events and exhibitions which reflects our broad museum audiences.

We will encourage co-production and co-curation.

We will ensure visitors' voices are present in the museums and will actively seek opportunities for dialogue and consultation with visitors.

We will use multi-layered and multi-sensory interpretation to maximise access.

We will ensure our exhibition spaces are as accessible as possible.

We will provide information and interpretation in alternative formats where possible.

Collections and Conservation

We will aim to make our collections as accessible as possible through ongoing documentation, conservation and research.

We will work with visitors and stakeholders to better understand how collections can be relevant and meaningful to diverse audiences – consulting with audiences on how collections are researched, presented and used.

We will ensure our collections are well-managed, understood and accessible to audiences in person and online.

We will promote co-curation, co-production and participation in order to democratise our collections. We will collect strategically and in partnership with visitors and local communities where possible, in reference with our collections policy.

We will improve transparency and accessibility of our collections online.

Through touring, lending, publishing and broadcasts we will aim to share our collections and ideas reach audiences nationally and internationally

We will be proactive in ensuring equal access to our collections and in using them to enhance the lives of the widest possible audience.

We will use our collections to help enhance the lives of individuals, to encourage community working, and to facilitate discussion about contemporary issues.

We will aim to make opportunities to access and research our collections accessible to all.

Staff and Volunteers

We are committed to ongoing staff consultation, training and development with staff and volunteers about the physical,

sensory, cognitive & Neurodivergent, social, geographical, cultural, financial, technological, language and attitudinal barriers that they might encounter on a daily basis, and how we might overcome them. We are committed to actively engage with disabled people as part of the duties of our organisation under the PSED (Public Sector Equality Duty).

Access and Inclusion is built into our induction programmes as well as our ongoing staff and volunteer development programme which is regularly reviewed.

As part of any induction process an employee identifying as being a disabled person will be given the option of having a Workplace Assessment involving Access to Work to ensure that they have equipment and processes in place to maximise their ability at work.

Staff

Hull Museums ensure that no job applicant or employee will be treated less favourably or disadvantaged, either directly or indirectly due to physical, sensory, cognitive &

Neurodivergent, social, geographical, cultural, financial, technological, language and attitudinal barriers to access.

These principles are supported by an Equal Opportunities in Employment policy and a Recruitment policy.

In line with the Hull Culture and Leisure Recruitment Policy

(3.1 Fairness), we aim;

- To ensure that equality of opportunity is an integral part of recruitment processes in the Company.
- To ensure that all selection decisions are based on merit following the fair and objective assessment of candidates against the skills, competencies, qualifications,

attributes, knowledge and experience required for the job.

- To ensure that the Company's workforce is representative of the local community.
- Hull Museums only offers paid internships in line with Hull Culture and Leisure policy.

Volunteers

Hull Museums value diversity and aim to reflect the local community in our volunteer cohort.

Volunteers are actively encouraged from a wide cross section of backgrounds and experiences and volunteering opportunities are promoted in ways that makes them accessible to a diverse range of people.

Hull Museums are committed to equality for volunteers whilst recognising the legal differences between employees and volunteers under the 2010 Equalities Act.

Internships

Hull Museums supports paid internships and these follow the normal Hull Culture and Leisure recruitment procedure.

Related Guidelines and Policies

Our other organisational policies and procedures will be reviewed in line with this policy.

External

2018 Museum Accreditation Guidelines

VAQAS (Visit England Quality assessment Scheme)

‘Social Model of Disability’, Mental Health Foundation 2019,
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/learning-disabilities/a-to-z/s/social-model-disability>

2017 Acas Research Paper, ‘Supporting Trans Employees in the Workplace’

2019 Arts Council England, ‘Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case: A Data Report 2017-18.’

Humber Museums Partnership

Humber Museums Audience Development Plan

Hull Culture and Leisure

Hull Culture and Leisure - Recruitment Policy

Code of Practice for Managers on Religious and Cultural Needs in the Workplace

Equal opportunities in Employment Policy and Guidelines

Employment of Disabled People – Guidelines for Managers

Policy on Employment of Disabled People

Positive Action Framework 2014; Strategy for Equality

Hull Museums

Hull Museums Equality Action Plan

Hull Museums – Collections Development Policy

Hull Museums Digital Policy

Hull Museums Events and Exhibitions Policy

Hull Museums Display Policy

Hull Museums Loans Policy

Heritage Learning

Heritage Learning - Learning Policy and Forward Plan 2018-
2022

Implementation of this Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Hull Museums Equality Action Plan and Humber Museums Audience Development Plan.

The role of the Access and Inclusion Working Group

This policy was put together by our Access and Inclusion Staff Working group, responding to visitor feedback and best practise research.

Our working group meets regularly to discuss;

- Customer feedback
- Issues arising
- Partnership opportunities
- Training opportunities

- Current best practise
- Opportunities for improvements

Our working group feed into our other departments and working groups, allowing us to share information and inform department-wide planning and policy.

If you would like to pass on any feedback please contact

museums@hcandl.co.uk or call 01482 300300

This policy will be reviewed annually. The next review is due in December 2023.

This policy is available on our website

www.hcandl.co.uk/museums in its full form and an abridged

Policy Statement.