

Leeds Museums & Galleries Access Policy

Leeds Museums & Galleries (LM&G) is committed to, and believes that all people and sectors of the community have a fundamental right to engage with, use and enjoy the collections and services it provides. We recognise that there are many barriers to access at all levels but are committed to making all aspects of our activities as fully accessible as our resources allow, including access to buildings, collections, events, exhibitions, learning and to our staff and volunteers as well as visitors.

LM&G is committed to increasing public access to collection and information associated with those collections, to increase knowledge and understanding of the items the Service holds and Leeds' cultural heritage. We will ensure sustainable access to collections and that any competing demands of access and long term care of collection items will be managed in accordance with the outcomes of a collection care risk assessment. We will provide welcoming staff and learning opportunities for different audiences, different levels of ability and tailor our programmes to meet the needs of specific groups. We will promote all our activities and collections using accessible means of communication.

LM&G will adhere to all national and international statutes of law, including specifically in relation to access, but not exclusively the Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

This policy is consistent with Leeds City Council's Equality and Diversity Policy 2011 -15, which adopts the Equalities Review 2007 definition of an equal society:

“An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises what people can do and can be.”

We will follow national standards, ethical codes and best practice guidelines including, but not exclusively, BS8300 Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people, BS 8477:2007 Code of practice for customer service, PAS 197:2009 Code of practice for cultural collections management and PAS78 Guide to good practice in commissioning accessible websites.

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

To eliminate and reduce barriers and ensure equality of access we will consider the following aspects of accessibility to our services and collections:

- **Physical:** enabling people with physical disabilities, the elderly and those caring for young people to reach and appreciate every part of the service and its collections
- **Sensory:** to build into all aspects of the services activities a wide range of different sensory experiences
- **Intellectual:** we acknowledge that people have different learning styles and we will red learning styles by adopting clear interpretive guidance
- **Cultural:** we acknowledge and recognise cultural differences and seek to represent varied cultural experiences and issues through our programmes and exhibitions
- **Emotional / Attitudinal:** to ensure that all visitors feel welcomed and valued
- **Financial:** we will aim to minimise financial barriers to the use of sites and the collections and wherever possible

How Leeds Museums & Galleries will deliver the policy

We will ensure delivery of our approach in a number of ways including but not limited to:

- Active participation in Leeds City Council's Equality Framework which includes Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Diversity Impact Assessment of services and sites
- Our prioritisation of community engagement activity in our programme with the creation of additional posts supported by our Arts Council Major grants programme from 2012
- Adopting best practice guidance for interpretation including exhibition texts and interactives
- Consideration of varied audience needs and learning styles in programme planning including formal learning at sites as well as across the service
- Consideration of access issues, barriers and priorities at each site through their individual Site Development Plans with appropriate action plans
- We will consult regularly with our audiences and non-users to ensure the broadest possible access to our facilities, services and collections. We will ensure that contractor, consultants and outside agencies working for, or with LM&G adopt and observe our access policies