

STROUD DISTRICT (COWLE) MUSEUM SERVICE Access Policy

Museum: The Museum in the Park

Name of governing body: The Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Trust (owner of the collections) in partnership with Stroud District Council (collection manager & museum service provider).

Date on which this policy was approved by the Governing Body: 02.02.15

Date at which this policy is due for review: December 2016

1. Introduction

The Museum in the Park has collections that are recognised as being of regional and national significance, with regional, national and international users and visitors. Its core purpose is to safeguard the collections, to make them widely accessible for study and enjoyment and to preserve them for future generations. Mindful of the constraints of the Grade 2 listing of the Mansion House, the Museum is committed to complying with legislation concerning physical access and strives to surpass the basic requirements of such legislation at all times.

It is our policy to facilitate access to the Museum and collections for all our visitors and staff, physically, intellectually and electronically and to take into account their physical, intellectual and sensory requirements.

The Museum has undertaken an Access Statement using the template provided by Visit England. This is continually reviewed and has been used to inform this Access Policy, copy of which is available on the Museum's website.

2. Building and Services

- Entrances, public areas, facilities and circulation routes are fully accessible.
- Signage and orientation are provided for the benefit of all (including Braille).
- The Museum is committed to an ongoing process of consultation and evaluation in relation to the updating or introduction of services.
- Access to the collections must be balanced against the care and management of the collections and resource available. Refer to Care & Conservation Policy.

3. Staff and training

- People with disabilities receive equal opportunities in recruitment, employment and training.
- As part of a staff induction process, new staff receive disability awareness training including addressing the needs of visitors with specific requirements, appropriate use of language and assisting those with disabilities, and throughout evacuation procedures. This Policy is shared during induction.
- All staff will receive on-going training in areas of awareness and legislation appropriate to their roles and needs.
- The Council is accredited by 'Investors in People'.
- The Council is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Act 2010.

4. Social (Cultural) and Financial

- The Museum in the Park is committed to free admission for all its visitors.
- Where possible, special exhibitions will not incur charges.

- There may be a charge for some educational activities to cover staff and material costs. These will be kept to a minimum.
- All visitors receive a warm and friendly greeting from staff.
- The comfort and ease of visitors will be addressed, including providing, where possible, appropriate toilets, seating in galleries and an on-site wheelchair.
- The Museum will programme events and activities which aim to attract new audiences or those not pre-disposed to visiting a museum whilst recognising that audiences have a variety of needs.

5. Intellectual

- The needs of visitors are taken into account in the preparation of publicity material and information for visitors.
- The needs of visitors are taken into account when preparing and presenting collections information and interpretation in the galleries and online.
- Information about facilities and services is available in a variety of formats at the reception desks and can be requested in advance of a visit.
- Education staff strive to tailor educational programmes for specific groups and their requirements.
- Education materials will be made available for different audiences and abilities, as required and as resources allow.
- Events and activities are programmed throughout the year for people with a wide range of abilities.

6. Sensory

- It is the principal duty of all staff to safeguard the collections, to make them accessible for study and enjoyment and to preserve them for future generations.
- The Museum utilises different senses in its displays, including auditory (sounds and narration), olfactory (smells), visual (labels, objects and information sheets) and touch (for some objects and handling items).
- We aim to fulfil all reasonable requests for tours and handling sessions in liaison with the relevant staff.
- An induction loop is used for talks in Gallery 2 and Gallery 1 and can be made available on request. An induction loop is permanently available at the reception desk with appropriate signage.

7. Evacuation and Security

- Staff are trained to ensure safe evacuation of all visitors in the event of an emergency.
- Security is regularly reviewed and externally assessed at least every five years.

8. Outreach

- Those who are unable to visit the Museum can select from a number of outreach options.

9. Electronic

- Electronic access via the Museum's website and through resources offered within the galleries is regularly revised and updated in accordance with current best practice and guidelines.

10. Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed by the Visitor Services Officer annually and any recommended changes presented to the Governing Body for approval.