

ACCESS POLICY

MIDDLESBROUGH MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

▪ INTRODUCTION

- Middlesbrough Museums and Galleries aims to create learning environments that inspire confidence, enjoyment, understanding and a desire to return, by providing a range of opportunities for a wide cross section of people regardless of age, background or ability. The Access Policy will support this aim by promoting a framework that strives to include all visitors and potential visitors through a wide range of means, as resources allow.

▪ WHAT IS ACCESS?

- People need to be able to access their required services, feel welcomed by staff, and find the environment appropriate to their needs. Access should be a core function of each venue's operations, to ensure that audiences' needs are continually met.

- Access covers a diverse range of needs and can be broken down into the broad categories of race, disability, gender, age, religion/belief, and sexual orientation. Middlesbrough Council believes that all Middlesbrough citizens, employees and partners should have equal access to services and opportunities in every aspect of their lives. The Council celebrates the diversity of the town and the enrichment that a multicultural society brings.

- Areas of access covered in this policy include:

- Physical access: we aim to maintain buildings and facilities that are as physically accessible as possible.
- Intellectual access: we aim to provide information in a range of formats appropriate to the needs of a wide range of visitors.
- Financial access: we aim to keep charges to a minimum to ensure that as many people as possible are able to access our services.
- Emotional access: we aim to provide a good standard of customer care to ensure that all visitors feel welcome and comfortable in our venues.

▪ CUSTOMER CARE

- Staff will assist and welcome visitors according to their needs

- Where possible, the venues will provide baby changing facilities, access and parking for pushchairs, on site wheelchairs, and seating, for the comfort and ease of visitors.
- Wherever possible the venues will provide adequate signage and navigation to suit a range of needs, and will respond to requests made by the public regarding information required in alternative formats, as resources become available.
- Staff will receive training in areas of awareness and legislation appropriate to their roles and needs.

- **ACCESSING VENUES**

- Middlesbrough Museums and Galleries consists of 3 venues: Dorman Museum, Captain Cook Birthplace Museum and mima, middlesbrough institute of modern art (opens January 2007).
- Our buildings will be available to all residents and visitors, wherever possible, and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act as resources allow.
- The Dorman Museum is situated on Linthorpe Road in Middlesbrough. It has flat access and automatic doors, adapted toilets, a lift and Braille panels. There are disabled car parking spaces at the front of the museum.
- The Captain Cook Birthplace Museum is situated in Stewart Park in Marton. It has flat access, adapted toilets, and a lift. There are disabled car parking spaces directly outside the Museum.
- Opening times for these two venues are:
November -February, Tuesday-Sunday 9am – 4.30pm (4pm for Captain Cook)
March - October, Tuesday – Sunday 10am – 5.30pm
Closed: Mondays, 24 - 28 December, 1 January
Annual maintenance first week of January
- mima is situated in Middlesbrough town centre, It has flat access and automatic doors at the entrance. There are adapted toilets and baby changing facilities on all floors, and two lifts. There are disabled car parking spaces directly outside the gallery.
- Opening times for mima are:
Tuesday-Saturday, 10am – 5pm, Sunday 12noon – 4pm.
Closed: Mondays

- The Dorman Museum and the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum have both had recent access audits completed (Cleveland Disability Forum and White Young Green respectively). Mima is working on all access issues relating to the new building with All Clear Design, who are access consultants recommended by Arts Council England.
- Admission to all venues is free, however there may be a charge for some educational activities to cover staff and material costs.

- **RESOURCES**

- Our museums and galleries contain a wide and varied range of collections, which we will strive to make as accessible to the public as possible.
- Information on displays will be provided in a range of formats, e.g. labels, large print, film, interactives and audio guides, as resources allow.
- Publications are produced to cover a range of interests and levels of enquiry.
- The venues aim to present labels and displays that respects a diversity of backgrounds.
- Collections are continually being updated and developed to greater reflect the diversity of the local area.

- **EDUCATION**

- The venues aim to provide a range of handling materials for different audiences and levels of ability.
- Education staff will 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.

- **MARKETING**

- The Museums and Galleries Service aims to keep the public informed of its collections, temporary displays and events through appropriate publicity.

- Marketing and publicity material is available on request in a range of alternative formats, as resources allow.

- **OTHER PLANS AND POLICIES**

- The Access Policy is a working document that will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with changes to the museums and galleries, and changes in legislation.

- The Access Policy is part of a wider group of policies developed by the Service to meet the needs of the public. These policies are available on request and include:
 - Diversity Action Plan
 - Education Policy
 - Business Plan
 - Child Protection Policy
 - Collections Management Policy