

Leicester City Council's Museums and Galleries Access Policy 2016-20

This policy covers all aspects of public access for general visitors to the council's museums (New Walk Museum, Newarke Houses Museum, Jewry Wall Museum, Guildhall, Abbey Pumping Station) as well as some aspects of access to collections not displayed in museums. It does not include access to stored collections, collections enquiries or access by researchers working in non-public spaces. These will be covered by a separate policy to be published in 2016.

It applies to all museum visitors whether or not they are local residents.

Leicester's museums and collections are provided for the inspiration, education and use of our visitors and potential visitors. All people and sectors of the community have the right to engage with, use and enjoy museum collections. We are therefore committed to making all aspects of our activities as accessible as we can. This includes our buildings, collections, events, displays, exhibitions, and learning programmes.

The basis of our policy is that accessibility is as much about promoting equality of opportunity as it is about addressing any specific barriers that might prevent people from accessing our sites and collections.

Our commitment to accessibility

We will seek to build accessibility into everything we do, to develop and improve our service. We will make continuous improvements as our resources permit and will take into consideration feedback from the public.

We will train our staff and volunteers on accessibility issues.

We will consider the following in seeking to eliminate barriers and ensure equality of opportunity for all:

Physical – We will help people with physical disabilities to engage with and enjoy the museum's buildings and collections, as well as people with mobility difficulties such as elderly people and parents with young children.

Sensory – We will help visitors with sensory difficulties, vision and/or hearing impairments, to engage with and enjoy the museums and collections.

Intellectual – We recognise that people have different learning styles and needs and we will provide interpretation in a range of different ways. We will also seek to include a variety of "voices" to add richness to our narrative content, recognising that our visitors have different perspectives and interests. We aim to ensure people of all intellectual abilities, including those with learning difficulties, can engage with and enjoy our museums and collections. Our aim is to provide a service that is relevant to and reflective of the people of Leicester.

Language – We will consider the language needs of all our visitors including people for whom English is not their first language.

Cultural – We recognise that our visitors and potential visitors come from different cultural backgrounds and include many whose knowledge of English history and culture may be limited.

Ambience – We will seek to ensure that our museums' environments, staff and volunteers are welcoming to all our visitors and help them to feel welcome, safe and comfortable.

Financial – We normally provide free access to all our museums. We charge for certain events and activities but where possible we try to ensure that any charges are affordable whatever the financial circumstances of our visitors and potential visitors.

Buildings

We aim to provide physical access to public areas in our buildings and facilities for all our visitors. However, all our sites are historic listed buildings in their own right, and so some physical adaptations cannot be provided. In these circumstances we will try and find other ways to make our collections and the museum experience as accessible as possible.

Collections

We are committed to increasing public access to our collections and information about them.

We will do this in varied ways, including for example displays, handling sessions, publications, talks and events as well as on-line access.

We will seek to provide access to our collections across the city without the need to visit museums, for instance through outreach work using handling collections, "pop up" museums with temporary displays, loans of exhibits to non-museums, and our permanent museum display areas in three libraries.

We will also provide access to our collections beyond our museums and beyond the local authority area for instance through loans, publications, media coverage and on- line services. Our museum websites will provide information about and access to our collections.

We also encourage people to engage with our collections as volunteers, supported directly by the arts and museum service or as members of our various museum supporters' groups.

Museum experiences beyond our buildings

We will, where resources allow, develop museum displays in community locations, such as libraries and neighbourhood centres.

We also provide related information on the story of Leicester at Visit Leicester, the city's Tourist Information Centre. Heritage interpretation panels across the city provide on-the-spot information about the Story of Leicester, and displays are provided at other locations such as City Hall.

Learning activities

In addition to our schools' programme, we will provide formal and informal learning opportunities for all age groups, for instance through family activities, events and talks.

Visitor services

Our front of house staff will welcome all visitors and assist them as and when required. They will be available in the galleries to help visitors understand and enjoy the collections.

In our standards of customer care we aim to meet the nationally recognised Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Standard (VAQAS).

We will consider the comfort and access needs of our visitors by providing, where possible, lifts, accessible toilets, baby changing facilities, access and storage for pushchairs, seating in galleries and on-site wheelchairs.

Whilst aiming to meet the needs of all our visitors, we are disability-friendly, family- friendly and child-friendly venues.

We recognise that our visitors wish to do different things and will often behave in non-typical ways. We will not restrict any activity without a good reason, and this will be explained if the need arises.

We recognise that many visitors come with carers, and the needs of both are important to us.

Communication

We will promote the Service's activities and events using a range of media, to maximise engagement with our diverse audiences.

We will provide a range of ways that people can communicate with us.

We will communicate using plain English, which is free from jargon and appropriate for our intended audience.

We will evaluate our services and projects to ensure they meet the provision of this policy. We will consult users and non-users on new developments, and we will communicate our future plans to them.

Access Statement Jewry Wall Museum

This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with disabilities but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer all our visitors.

Introduction

Leicester was one of the most important settlements in Roman Britain and Jewry Wall Museum stands next to one of the city's most famous landmarks: the Jewry Wall itself and the remains of the Roman town's public baths.

Jewry Wall Museum is currently closed. The grounds are only opened on special event days. See local event listings.

If you have any queries, please email museums@leicester.gov.uk

The Bath Site

The remains of the Roman bath site comprise of alternate bands of Roman brick, coursed masonry of local granite, limestone and sandstone, with grass in the centre. In the centre of the wall are two large arched openings approximately 3 metres (10ft) wide and 4 metres (13 ft) high. There are additional arched alcoves on the eastern side. There are interpretation panels across the bath site.

The whole bath site consists of uneven surfaces, with raised masonry and brick work and gravel paths. This makes it quite difficult to access by wheelchair users.

Public Toilets

There are no toilets on site.

Contact Information

Address: Jewry Wall Museum, St Nicholas Circle, Leicester, LE1 4LB

Email: museums@leicester.gov.uk

Web: www.leicester.gov.uk/museums