

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

New Walk Museum and Art Gallery



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

The museum is situated within the historic, pedestrianised, New Walk area of the city.

It hosts a wide range of temporary and permanent exhibitions including work from local and international artists.

An informative display that outlines the history of New Walk Museum and Art Gallery can be found in the main area of the museum.

The New Walk Museum and Art Gallery has a regular events programme and has many rooms to hire. The museum is available for private hire including areas for civil ceremonies.

Pre Arrival

Opening Times: Monday-Saturday, 10am-5pm
Sunday, 11am-5pm

Closed: Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve,
New Year's Day

- Free admission.
- For full details and maps of how to reach us please see the directions section of our website, alternatively you can plan your journey by car or public transport using www.transportdirect.info; simply enter your postcode and ours, which is **LE1 6TR** to get directions.
- The nearest railway station is a 5 minute walk away on London Road. Taxis are available at the station. If you require an accessible taxi you can book this in advance on 0116 251 5105.
- New Walk Museum and Art Gallery is located in Leicester City Centre on New Walk. The museum is located on the outskirts of the city centre, there is a small car park located on the site which can be accessed via Princess Road West. There is on street parking available on West Street and Princess Road West.
- For more details including local bus information please visit [Google Maps](#). To plan your journey to Leicester please visit [Leicester travel pages](#). All links can be found on our website:

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/museums-and-galleries/our-venues>.

Car Parking & Arrival

New Walk Museum car park can be access from Princes Road East. The car park consists of the following:

- 1 bike park
- 2 disabled bays
- 18 car parking spaces

On arrival, if the two disabled bays are occupied, please ring the museums reception (**0116 2254900**) who will be able to advise if alternative parking at the front of the museum is available. The two disabled bays can be found by entering the car park, going straight to the end and then turning left.

Visitors can be dropped off near the wrought iron gates at the far end of the car park.

Main Entrance & Reception

New Walk Museum and Art Gallery is accessible from the main entrance (on New Walk) on the ground floor. There is a ramp that allows wheelchair users to enter the site. There are two glass doors on entry that will automatically open.

- The main entrance door opens up to 58 inches
- The outer glass door opens up to 43 inches
- The inner glass door opens to 51 inches

The reception area leads you to the first floor using the stairs or to the main ground floor of the museum.

The ground floor of the museum is level, except for the access to the Ancient Egypt gallery where there are two accesses, one via a ramp and the other via three steps.

There is a hearing loop in our Victorian Art Gallery and Audio guides for our Picasso exhibition. The following areas have WIFI:

- Café
- Lord Mayors Room
- Victorian Art Gallery
- Dinosaur Gallery
- Reception foyer

There is a wheelchair loan available for inside the museum.

Attractions & Displays- Ground Floor

- Shop
- Café
- Dinosaur Gallery
- Corridor showing history of New Walk Museum and Art Gallery (The Wall)
- Accessible toilets
- Toilets
- Corridor leading to Victorian Art Gallery
- Ancient Egypt Gallery
- The Den
Wild Space
- Victorian Art Gallery, this has a stage which is accessed by four steps.
- Three adjoining galleries (7,8,9) for temporary exhibitions
- 2 meeting rooms (Council Room and Lord Mayors Room)

The ground floor is mainly wooden, however there is carpeting in the Ancient Egypt Gallery. The Wild Space area has a multi-surface floor made up of wooden flooring, vinyl and carpet.

Attractions & Displays- First Floor

- Gallery for temporary exhibitions
- German Expression Exhibition
- Picasso Exhibition
- Arts and Crafts Exhibition
- World Arts Exhibition

Access to the first floor is via a lift or using the stairs at the reception. There are 27 steps to the first floor.

Wheelchair access to the 1st floor is currently for 2 wheelchair users.

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan will need to be completed before accessing the first floor.

The first floor has wooden flooring, except in the World Arts Gallery which is carpeted.

Public Toilets

New Walk Museum and Gallery has one accessible toilet and male and female toilets which are all situated on the ground floor at the rear of the museum.

The accessible toilet requires a Radar key which can be collected from the reception. The lock mechanism requires the user to close door and turn handle up to lock, to unlock the handle needs to be placed in the downward position.

The sink in the accessible toilet is fitted with a lever tap, mirror and hand drier. There is an audible alarm fitted in the accessible toilet for anyone requiring assistance.

Additional information

- Assistance dogs are welcome and water can be provided upon request.
- Selected staff have received disability training.
- Evacuation procedures are in place and can be made available on request. Evac Chairs are located on the ground floor and Ibex chairs are located on the first floor.
- Staff undertake regular Health and Safety training.

Contact Information

- **Address:** New Walk Museum and Art Gallery, 53 New Walk, New Walk, Leicester, LE1 7EA
- **Telephone:** 0116 225 4900
- **Email:** museums@leicester.gov.uk
- **Web:** www.leicester.gov.uk/museums