

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

Newarke Houses Museum and Gardens



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

Newarke Houses Museum, dating back six hundred years is a Grade 2* listed building situated near to the City Centre next door to De Montfort University campus, Leicester Castle and Rupert's Gateway.

Over the centuries Newarke Houses Museum has had many lives. These include being used for houses for notable Leicester gentry and merchants such as William Wyggeston. In 1645 it was involved in the Siege of Leicester and It has also been used as a school for boys. Newarke Houses Museum opened to the public in 1953 as a museum.

Newarke Houses Museum hosts a regular events programme including talks and seasonal children's events. The museum is available for private hire with our newly refurbished garden galleries available at competitive rates.

Newarke Houses Museum is accessible on all floors via a lift.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require assistance please telephone 0116 2254980 or email museums@leicester.gov.uk

Pre Arrival

Opening times: Monday to 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 LE2 7BY to get directions.
- The nearest railway station is a 10 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.
- Newarke Houses Museum is located in Leicester City Centre next to De Montfort University campus in the Newarke. The nearest car park is 5 minutes' walk away at the Holiday Inn Hotel. (NCP car park).
- 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/your-council-services/lc/leicester-city-museums/museums/the-guildhall/>

Car Parking & Arrival

The Newarke Houses Museum has no car park and therefore no accessible parking. There is pay and display parking on the Newarke outside (Blue badge holders can park for free). Please call 0116 2254980 for further details.

- Visitors can be dropped off outside the museum and cars can be parked at a nearby car park. The nearest car park is 5 minutes' walk away at the Holiday Inn hotel.
- The entrance doors are large and automatic and are very accessible.
- We have 2 floors in the museum and 2 mezzanine levels. Our lift stops at all 4 levels of the museum.
- The city also has 3 park and ride facilities on the outskirts of town.

Main Entrance & Reception

- The main entrance and reception is suitable for wheelchairs and the area is well lit with spotlights.
- The floor area in reception and most of the ground floor is made of stone with a lift situated in the room on the left of the reception area.
- There are seats available in the reception area.
- The reception and counter area is used for information, shop purchases and tickets for events.
- There is a hearing loop system in place.
- There is a wheelchair loan available for inside the museum.

Attractions & Displays

Newarke Houses museum and gardens incorporates the museum of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment.

- The museum is composed of two historic houses, Wygston's Chantry House and Skeffington House and tells the social history of Leicester.
- Discover the history of the Regiment, including a recreation of a First World War trench with sound and lighting. The museum displays include a cinema experience, a collection of toys from Tudor to present day and a play area for children to try various games.
- Visit to find out more about Leicester's famous son Daniel Lambert and visit a 1950s street scene inspired by Wharf Street that includes the Jolly Angler public house, a grocer and a pawnbroker, with sounds and conversations from the times.
- Through oral histories, archive film, computer interactives and collections, discover the histories of Newarke Houses, the surrounding historic area and contemporary Leicester.
- The beautiful gardens at Newarke Houses Museum are available to access (they are partly accessible to wheelchairs).

Public Toilets

- Newarke Houses Museum has one accessible toilet and male and female toilets and they are all situated on the ground floor.
- The accessible toilet does not require a lock it has a twist lock, a grab rail and an emergency alarm.
- The sink in the accessible toilet is fitted with a lever tap, mirror and hand drier.

Additional information

- Assistance dogs are welcome and water can be provided upon request.
- Selected staff have received disability training.
- We have a wheelchair available for use.

Contact Information

- **Address:** Newarke Houses Museum, The Newarke Leicester LE2 7BY
- **Telephone:** 0116 2254980
- **Email:** museums@leicester.gov.uk
- **Web:** www.leicester.gov.uk/museums