

MUSEUM OF THE HOME

Access Policy Statement

1. Implementation

Approval

The Access Policy Statement will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. This policy was approved by the governing body on 11/12/2023

Access

The Access Policy Statement will be made available to all internal staff, trustees and volunteers, and is included in the induction process. The Access Policy Statement will be available to the public online.

Review

The Access Policy Statement will be reviewed at least every five years, with the next review due before 11/12/2028

2. Policy objective

Our vision is to be an internationally renowned museum about the home which enriches people's lives and inspires an understanding of home and home life, both past and present.

3. Who is covered by this policy?

All staff, visitors to and users of the Museum of the Home.

4. Policy statement

- To provide a distinctive and memorable museum experience which inspires, informs and provides enjoyment to visitors of all ages and abilities.
- To be a leading centre for the study of home by developing and enabling access to our rich collections and archives, collaborating in scholarly research and creating outstanding displays and exhibitions.
- To engage and inspire diverse audiences with excellent learning and engagement opportunities that encourage discovery, spark imaginations and offer life-enhancing experiences.

- To be at the heart of our communities' and London's cultural networks, and contribute to the creative, social and economic development of Hackney and East London.
- To be a leader in the museum sector and actively champion the development and improvement of museums in London and beyond.
- To ensure the Museum is sustainably resourced and managed for the benefit of future generations.

Our Definition of Access

We believe that everyone has a right to engage with and enjoy the Museum and its buildings, collections and gardens. Although we recognise that there are many barriers to access across the museum, we are dedicated to improving access by adopting best practice for the benefit of all our visitors and staff, both now and as we plan to develop the Museum for the future.

We define access as something that is made possible when physical, sensory, financial, intellectual, emotional and cultural barriers are removed or reduced.

Our Commitment to Accessibility

This Policy supports our policy statement by providing a framework that strives to include all our visitors, potential visitors, volunteers and staff. We aim to provide the widest possible access to our buildings, gardens and collections to enable audiences to enjoy and engage with the Museum. We aim to provide independent use wherever possible by removing as many barriers to access as is feasible within the limits of budgetary, legal and planning considerations.

We are committed to developing a programme of activities and events that are designed to provide inspiring lifelong learning and engagement opportunities to engage groups from a wide range of backgrounds and all sectors of our community. We will also regularly consult with audiences through forums, conducting visitor surveys through the Audience Agency's Audience Finder, and evaluating programmes, workshops and events and use this data to shape our provision to ensure it is meeting their needs and develop our programmes going forward.

To eliminate barriers and ensure equality of access we will consider the following forms of accessibility:

Physical

We aim to provide equal access to our building, gardens and facilities for all visitors wherever possible and to keep all equipment and facilities in full working order. As a Grade 1 listed building in a conservation area, some physical adaptations are impossible to undertake. Nevertheless, we are constantly working towards improving the facilities available to visitors with disabilities and will actively try to make our collections accessible even when our buildings are not. We aim to improve external access to the Museum by building a new external ramp and widening the footpaths.

Sensory

We aim to enable visitors with sensory impairments such as people who are blind or partially-sighted, or people who are deaf or hard of hearing, to enjoy the Museum's buildings, gardens and collections. We aim to provide the means for all visitors, whether through an independent visit or by coming along to a facilitated session, to gain an understanding and appreciation of the Museum and our collections. We are committed to adopting best practice in the display and interpretation of our collections for people with sensory impairments.

Intellectual

We are committed to increasing public access to the collection, library and information and to increasing knowledge and understanding of the idea of 'home' in the broadest sense. We will provide learning opportunities for different audiences and levels of ability and tailor our programme to the needs of specific groups. We aim to provide information and interpretation using a range of different learning styles and formats appropriate to the needs of a wide range of visitors. We will provide learning opportunities and programmes for our temporary and permanent displays to interpret the collections for all of our visitors.

As well as our learning programmes, we will provide varied means of access to the collections, including exhibitions, displays, facilitated sessions (including object handling sessions), publications, events, audio guides, mobile phone tours and apps.

For visitors unable to visit the Museum, we will provide, where possible, online and digital access to our collections, displays, exhibitions and learning programmes/teaching materials by using new digital technologies e.g. social media, video, podcasts and an app.

Cultural

When devising content for learning programmes and resources, as well as other communications such as marketing and interpretation panels for our exhibitions and displays, we will consider the needs of people for whom English is not their first language. We currently offer the Bloomberg Connects App, which provides our content in 37 different languages and will commit to reviewing take up in languages other than English to identify the main languages we need to create guides for.

Emotional

We will ensure the Museum environment and its staff are welcoming to all visitors. Our Visitor Experience team will be available in the galleries to provide assistance and information and to enable enjoyment of the collections. We will consider the comfort of our visitors by providing, where possible, accessible toilets, baby changing facilities, access for pushchairs, seating in galleries and on-site wheelchairs. We aim to provide appropriate signage and navigatory tools to suit a range of audiences and to allow visitors to enjoy an independent visit. Our learning programmes will contribute towards participants' emotional well-being by enabling quality lifelong learning opportunities.

Financial

We offer free admission to our main galleries and gardens. We aim to keep charges for temporary exhibitions, activities and events as competitive as possible to ensure that as many people as possible are able to access our services. When reviewing our charges we will

take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access. This policy is also applied to the retail and catering outlets provided by the Museum.

Employment and Training

The Museum of the Home is an equal opportunities employer. We aim to ensure that our employment practices do not discriminate against people with disabilities and we maintain systems for monitoring and reviewing procedures. We are committed to ongoing training in access issues for staff and volunteers and we consult specialist organisations and other experts on ways to improve training in this area. The Museum's Voices for Change group meets regularly to discuss improvements to the Museum's provision and to agree on recommendations for further action. The Head of HR represents the Leadership Team on this group.

Consultation and Monitoring

We will designate a member of the Leadership Team to represent and champion disability issues. This member of staff will be responsible for monitoring the Access Policy. A staff working party will be convened comprising staff representing all sections of the museum under the jurisdiction of the Leadership Team. This team will co-ordinate the activities connected to the Access Policy and Equality and Diversity Policy.

5. Responsibilities

Leadership Team

- We will prepare an Action Plan, approved by the Leadership Team, setting out the work which will be undertaken by staff to improve access and facilities across the Museum.
- The Leadership Team will take responsibility for implementing the Access Policy and the Equality and Diversity Policy. Through a process of regular audit and review, we will assess, identify and address existing access issues, as resources permit. We last undertook an Access Audit in 2023 and plan to undertake another one within 5 years of this date. We also aim to build accessibility into all areas of our work. This commitment extends to our staff as well as visitors.

All Staff

- All staff are responsible for implementing this policy.

This policy has been written in line with our Equality and Diversity policy and the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Equality Act 2010 and the PAS 197:2007 Code for Cultural Collections Management.

This policy will be shared with internal and external stakeholders via email as required, and will be published on our website to ensure availability to users and potential users.