

Chertsey Museum Access Policy

Approved date:

Review date: 1 August 2025

Chertsey Museum (CM) is committed to, and believes that all people and sectors of the community have a fundamental right to engage with, use and enjoy the collections and services it provides. We recognise that there are many barriers to access at all levels but are committed to making all aspects of our activities as fully accessible as our resources allow, including access to buildings, collections, events, exhibitions, learning and to our staff and volunteers as well as visitors.

CM is committed to increasing public access to collection and information associated with those collections, to increase knowledge and understanding of the items the Service holds and cultural heritage of the Borough of Runnymede. We will ensure sustainable access to collections and that any competing demands of access and long term care of collection items will be managed in accordance with the outcomes of a collection care risk assessment. We will provide welcoming staff and learning opportunities for different audiences, different levels of ability and tailor our programmes to meet the needs of specific groups. We will promote all our activities and collections using accessible means of communication.

CM will adhere to all national and international statutes of law, including specifically in relation to access, but not exclusively the Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

This policy is consistent with Runnymede Borough Council's Equality Policy (2012), which "recognises the importance of ensuring equality of opportunity and rights amongst all residents within its Borough, and within wider society. The Council is conscious that individuals and groups can experience a range of barriers which may prevent them from enjoying the same quality of life as others. The Council's vision is to bridge any gaps there may be between its communities and to enhance the quality of life of its residents by ensuring that its services are accessible by all, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation or any other characteristic that is protected under law."

We will follow national standards, ethical codes and best practice guidelines including, but not exclusively, for the design of buildings, customer service, cultural collections management and good practice in commissioning accessible websites.

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

To eliminate and reduce barriers and ensure equality of access we will consider the following aspects of accessibility to our services and collections:

- Physical: enabling people with physical disabilities, the elderly and those caring for young people to reach and appreciate every part of the service and its collections
- Sensory: to build into all aspects of the services activities a wide range of different sensory experiences
- Intellectual: we acknowledge that people have different learning styles and we will red learning styles by adopting clear interpretive guidance

- Cultural: we acknowledge and recognise cultural differences and seek to represent varied cultural experiences and issues through our programmes and exhibitions
- Emotional / Attitudinal: to ensure that all visitors feel welcomed and valued
- Financial: we will aim to minimise financial barriers to the use of sites and the collections and wherever possible

How Chertsey Museum will deliver the policy

We will ensure delivery of our approach in a number of ways including but not limited to:

- Active participation in Runnymede Borough Council's Equality Objectives
- Adopting best practice guidance for interpretation including exhibition texts and interactives
- Consideration of varied audience needs and learning styles in programme planning including formal learning at sites as well as across the service
- Consideration of access issues/barriers throughout Chertsey Museum
- We will consult regularly with our audiences and non-users to ensure the broadest possible access to our facilities, services and collections.
- We will ensure that contractor, consultants and outside agencies working for, or with CM adopt and observe our access policies

Access Plan

Physical	Maintain building, in particular lift, to ensure flat access throughout	On-going
	Ensure gallery floors are kept clear of trip hazards	On-going
	To maintain access to collections and history for those who cannot physically visit through the website, external talks and reminiscence sessions	On-going
Sensory	Where possible include items to touch & smell in exhibitions to increase sensory experience of visitors	On-going
Intellectual	Ensure that primary text is written in a clear style avoiding jargon	On-going
	Supply layers of information for visitors wishing to discover more	On-going
Cultural	Ensure that exhibitions and events reflect the cultural heritage and experiences of the Borough of Runnymede	On-going

Emotional/Attitudinal	Review and update social story on museum website for visitors with autism	Annually
	Train all education staff on ASD awareness	For all new staff with regular refreshers for all staff
	Train all staff on customer care including autism, dementia, visual and physical impairment	For all new staff with regular refreshers for all staff
Financial	To maintain free access to museum displays and exhibitions	On-going
	To maintain discounted access to children's activities for those in receipt of certain benefits as outlined in	On-going
	To ensure that educational sessions for schools does not disadvantage lower income areas	Annual review of education fees and charges