

The Ted Lewis Centre

Access Policy

1. Introduction

The museum is committed to maximising access for everyone, regardless of ability, age, gender, cultural or social background, sexual orientation, faith, language, location or wealth, by minimising or removing barriers that can prevent people from engaging with our buildings, collections, website, social media channels, programmes and staff.

We do everything that we can, within the limitations of our buildings and other resources, to offer the widest, richest, most engaging access for all our users. The museum recognises that access is a complex issue that must be addressed through the actions of the organisation as a whole, and that access provision benefits people generally, not just those with specific needs.

2. Scope

This policy covers provision at The Ted Lewis Centre, through our website and other online activities, and in other venues where we deliver outreach programmes, for example theatres, community venues and so on. This policy relates to access by our users and does not cover access in relation to staff, volunteers, freelancers or contractors.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the museum's commitment to maximising access and to identify the ways in which we achieve this across the organisation.

4. Definition of Terms

Access - When we refer to access, we mean the opportunity to engage with our buildings, collections, content and expertise. There are a number of key barriers to access:

- **Attitudinal** – for example, some people may have a lack of interest in, or awareness of, the museum and the subjects and issues it deals with, or our programmes and services;
- **Intellectual** - for example, some people may find the museum too specialist in its approach to subjects and how they are presented; some may have learning disabilities which affect their ability to engage with the museum; and some may not be able to read or speak English;
- **Cultural** - for example, some people may feel that the museum is not relevant to them and does not reflect their cultural or social heritage, or their interests;

- **Economic** - for example, some people may not be able to afford to visit the museum or take part in our programmes;
- **Geographic** - for example, some people will live too far away to visit the museum;
- **Physical/sensory** – for example, some people with physical disabilities, limited mobility, or hearing or visual impairments may not be able to access the museum, our website, social media channels or programmes;
- **Technological** – for example, some people may not have access to the internet at home or use a mobile phone;
- **Children.** A child for the purpose of our access policy is one who is under 16 or, having achieved the age of 14, is accompanied in the museum by a responsible adult.

5. Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the museum meets its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 by doing everything reasonably possible to make the museum accessible to the widest range of people.

The Chief Executive Officer and Volunteers are responsible for ensuring that all work and activities of their own and other colleagues takes into account the need to maximise access by addressing any issues that may be the barriers outlined above.

Everyone involved in developing, delivering or maintaining spaces, activities, resources and other services for our users is responsible for making them as accessible as possible.

6. Policy

The museum is committed to maximising access by, for example:

Physical access

- upholding the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by taking reasonable steps to ensure that policies, practices and procedures do not discriminate against disabled people; by providing auxiliary aids and services which enable disabled people to use the museum; and by removing, altering or circumventing physical barriers within our buildings;
- providing a parking space for blue badge holders;

- ensuring that all our galleries, exhibitions (including individual exhibits), learning spaces (including whiteboards and computers), toilet and reception are accessible to wheelchair users;
- providing a traditional wheelchair if advance notice is given;
- providing plenty of seating throughout our buildings
- providing a ramp for wheelchairs to access the front Reception.

Children

A part of the literary and cinematograph content of the museum relates to some aspects of pornography, misogyny and violence and accordingly admission is not available to children. Volunteers shall use their judgment and responsible adult declarations to establish the age of a person deemed to be a child, the benefit of the doubt being given to the volunteer. The museum may arrange special visits or areas when or where inappropriate content is not available or made reference to and in such cases, if the Trustees so decide as a matter of policy, children may be admitted.

Sensory access

- providing front-of-house volunteers who have the awareness and skills to successfully communicate with and provide a quality service to people with visual or hearing impairments taking into account RNIB and Action and Hearing Loss good practice guidelines;
- designing Exhibition Boards clearly using predominantly black 16 font characters on a white board;
- ensuring that video-based and electronic photo exhibits have subtitles where available;
- offering large print guides and individual visits or a dedicated volunteer to assist visually impaired visitors where appropriate;
- whilst the experience in the museum is primarily visual, taking initiatives to ensure those with visual impairment can be involved in the objects of the museum and its collections policy. One way this can be achieved is by means of dedicated events when relevant music recordings and a narrative by an expert can be delivered;
- ensuring, that our website meets the Web Accessibility standard so far as the resources of the Museum allow.

Intellectual access

- the trustees will take into account guidelines provided by Mencap;

- ensuring that the text used in our galleries, exhibitions, educational resources, publications, website and social media channels are clear and use as simple language as possible;
- providing clear signage, in particular of a pictorial/international nature where possible and appropriate;
- ensuring that the content and delivery of any presentations are tailored to the learning needs of their audiences;
- ensuring that information on our website is available in key tourist and community outlets;
- the museum having custody of an archive which is part of National Archives, to permit supervised access to this at reasonable times commensurate with the volunteer resources and expense to the museum in terms of heat and light. The museum shall be entitled to require recompense for extended research periods by visitors but this will not constitute a charge for admission

Attitudinal access

- ensuring that our promotional activities present the museum as a welcoming, non- threatening, inclusive destination;
- ensuring that visitors are made to feel welcome on arrival and are put at their ease;
- creating environments in which people can feel comfortable, valued and able to learn at their own pace and level;
- taking into account societal concern at exploitation and personal objectivisation, including, if called upon to do so, that the writings of Ted Lewis were of his era and that he did not hold such attitudes or activities as desirable, promoted or acceptable. Providing warnings as to content as appropriate

Cultural and international access

- providing explanations about the manner and style of the literature exhibited and made available and being aware that some of the images and accounts may not accord with the cultural and religious views of some visitors;
- taking into account that the novels of Ted Lewis were translated into a number of different languages, some of which the museum exhibits and supplies, to recognise that visitors may well be from abroad. Whilst the resources of the museum and its nature will not extend to providing an interpretation service, arranging discrete visits and/or research if asked to do so.

Economic access

- maintaining free entry to the museum subject to any variation decided by the trustees, who will take into account, fully, the need to afford a modest cost access;
- offering concessions where possible, for example for people in receipt of benefits, students and senior citizens.

Geographic access

- providing a rich online experience;
- producing artefacts and exhibition boards for selected venues;
- providing presentations and presenters for suitable outreach events and venues;
- providing QR codes for the Ted Lewis Trail where possible and within the resources of the museum.

7. Relegated Policies

The Equality Act 2010 bans unfair treatment and helps achieve equal opportunities in the workplace and in wider society. The Act replaced previous anti-discrimination laws and covers nine protected characteristics which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly- age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity/paternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Act prohibits unfair treatment when providing goods, facilities and services, when holding public functions, in the management of premises, and in education.

A number of organisations provide specialist advice, in particular:

- Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) - see rnib.org.uk
- Action on Hearing Loss (formerly RNID) - see actiononhearingloss.org.uk
- Mencap - see mencap.org.uk
- Web Accessibility Initiative - see w3.org/WAI
- The Museums Association's access guidelines which provide a useful overview of museums' responsibilities to maximise access in the broadest sense and these may be found at www.museumsassociation.org/policy/guidelines,
- Visit North Lincolnshire
- Adult Social Services and NGOs specialising in areas of challenged access.

8. Availability

This policy will be exhibited on our website and distributed to our stakeholders, North Lincolnshire Council, Barton Town Council, National Archives and The Fred Challinor Endowment. The Policy is also available on the Centre's Reception.

9. Review.

It is the duty of the CEO to review the Feedback provided by visitors, social media interaction and engage with the Volunteer Co-ordinator and Volunteers and check the Problems sheets on the admission documentation on a regular basis. In conjunction with the Volunteer Co-ordinator, the CEO will hold under review, all aspects of access and report on these issues to each Trustees meeting.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on or before each AGM and will be taken into account when the Trustees review the Business Plan and Operations Plans.

Approved by the Users and Experiences Committee 25th June 2023

Approved by the Trustees.....