

ACCESS POLICY

1. Mission Statement and Charitable Purpose

Mission: Amberley Museum showcases and preserves the rural, transport, industrial and communications history of the south of England for the learning and enjoyment of today's visitors and future generations. We engage with the community, providing opportunities for volunteers to support the Museum's goals and enjoy the associated social environment.

Charitable purpose: To provide and maintain a Centre or Centres in the South East of England for the exhibition to the public of specimens of machinery, equipment, buildings and inventions of whatever nature of historical or educational interest and such other objects of the fine and useful arts, archeology and geology including techniques of industrial military and planning processes, rural arts, crafts and industry and other activities showing human creativity of a historical or educational interest.

2. Statement of general principles

Championing equality, diversity and inclusion, the Museum supports people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to access our museum, our collections and the information about them.

We aim to identify and remove or reduce any barriers to accessing our collections. We recognise that barriers may be physical, intellectual, sensory, cultural, attitudinal or financial.

We will provide a variety of training to our staff and volunteers to enable them to be aware of and reduce barriers to access. Training will cover topics such as disability, dementia and autism awareness. The Museum will consult specialist organisations and other experts on ways to improve training in these areas.

Physical – to enable people with physical disabilities to reach and appreciate as many parts of the Museum as possible. To take into account the needs of the elderly and of people caring for young people.

Sensory – to enable visitors with impaired vision or hearing to enjoy the museum's building and collections.

Intellectual – we recognise that people have different learning styles and we will provide interpretation to cater for a range of learning styles. We also aim to ensure people with learning difficulties can engage with and enjoy the museum and the

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collections.

Cultural – to consider the needs of people for whom English is not a first language, or whose knowledge of English history and culture may be limited, or whose cultural experience is different to that portrayed at the museum.

Attitudinal / Emotional – to ensure the museum environment and the museum community (staff and volunteers) are welcoming to and represent visitors from all sections of the community, including historically marginalised groups.

Financial – we will take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access and offer opportunities for those on lower incomes to access the service, through reduced entry rates, volunteering opportunities and community outreach programmes.

We will continue to monitor our visitor profile and identify under-represented groups. We will continue to gather feedback from our visitors to help us to overcome barriers to access and to develop our audiences.

We provide Accessibility information on our website. All staff are happy to answer any further questions about accessibility.

We will safeguard the collections to the best of our ability so that they can be made as accessible as possible now and into the future. Our Collections Conservation and Care Policy and Plan and our Documentation and Inventory Policy and Plan will detail how we aim to achieve this.

We will continue to develop our Access and Inclusion Plan, based on periodic surveys and audits, detailing how we will improve all types of access. We have an Access and Inclusion Committee which meets every six months, with the aim of reviewing and developing the Access and Inclusion Plan.

This policy covers access to the site, the collections and their associated information, and access for our volunteer workforce.

3. Access to the collection/ site

3.1 Physical access

The Museum seeks to provide all visitors with equal physical access to the site and the buildings, within the constraints of our older buildings and structures, some of which are scheduled monuments or were once listed buildings. The Museum will ensure that current and future building projects provide appropriate physical access for all visitors. Expert advice is sought wherever necessary.

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We will continue to improve the Museum's physical accessibility following the recommendations in our various museum access surveys and audits and any future assessments of access.

We will continue to encourage and facilitate loans out of the collections to other institutions.

We plan to develop appropriate signage and navigation tools to suit a range of audiences, including a range of sensory formats.

3.2 Access to learning

Supporting diversity and inclusion, the Museum encourages and enables the widest possible audience to study the collection. We will increase opportunities for people to contribute to the Museum through participatory exhibitions and projects.

The Museum seeks ways to improve and extend access to information and scholarly research. We continue to consult people with disabilities, specialist organisations, and other museums and galleries, on the best and most practical ways of improving intellectual access.

The Museum will provide learning opportunities for different audiences and levels of ability and will tailor the programme to the needs of specific groups. Our offer includes workshops with our learning team, talks with our team of volunteer guides as well as a wide range of events. We will provide varied means of access to the collections, including displays, demonstrations, handling sessions, educational workshops, publications and events. We also aim to develop the use of our handling collections. We will expand our community engagement through digital and outreach options.

We will develop our labelling, signage and interpretation to be more accessible to more people. We are committed to developing and using a variety of different interpretative methods and we aim to provide levels of information and interpretation to suit a range of audiences and abilities. We will ensure that the presentation and labelling of displays respects a diversity of backgrounds.

We are planning a whole site interpretation plan to help us manage to present our site and collections in more accessible ways.

3.3 Access to Collections information

We will continue to record, check and develop electronic information about the

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collections (including digital images) with a view to making these accessible on-line in the future.

We will advertise our collections (both those on display and those currently in storage) on our website, with information on how to access them or any associated information. We will endeavour to make all areas of our collection available to all interested parties on request.

3.4 Access to visitor services

Our Museum staff and volunteers will assist and welcome all visitors to the Museum, both physically and digitally. Volunteers will be regularly available around the Museum to help people understand and enjoy the collections. Full support and training will be given to staff and volunteers to enable them to achieve this.

We will consider the comfort of our visitors by providing accessible toilets, baby changing facilities, access for pushchairs and wheelchairs and seating around the Museum.

3.5 Access to communication

We will promote our activities and events using a variety of accessible communication methods.

We will develop publicity material on request in alternative formats for a range of needs and languages.

We will provide a range of ways that people can communicate with us.

We will evaluate all our services and projects to ensure they meet the provision of this policy and we will consult users and non-users on all new developments.

4. Access for volunteers

The Museum is committed to identifying barriers to access and participation for our volunteers and will actively look at ways to minimise or remove the barriers. Our Access and Inclusion Plan details current projects, which will include how to improve physical access to the site and also how to make the site more inclusive for all our volunteers, by providing identified support and training.

5. Limitations

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The Museum aims to make most areas of the site physically accessible to all our visitors. However, there will always be some restrictions on access to some of our buildings, due to their age and/or scheduled status.

There may also be some restrictions imposed on researchers looking at particularly fragile objects or those in a poor condition, or those with associated health and safety issues.

6. Legal framework

The Museum works within the relevant legal frameworks, including

The Disability and Discrimination Act 1995
The Data Protection Act 2018
The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
The Equality Act 2010

7. Policy publication and review procedure

The Museum will publish this policy on our website
www.amberleymuseum.co.uk.

The policy will be reviewed at least every five years.

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